

Zion's Traveller :

OR, THE

Soul's Progress to HEAVEN ;

IN THE

Several Steps whereby it ascends from DEEP
DISTRESS and MISERY, to the Height
of TRIUMPH and GLORY.

By Mr. WILLIAM CRAWFORD Minister of
the Gospel at *Wiltoun*.

JER. l. 4, 5. *In those Days, and in that Time, the Children of Israel shall come, they and the Children of Judah together, going and weeping; they shall go and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the Way to Zion with their Faces thitherward.*

PSAL. lxxxiv. 7. *They shall go from Strength to Strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.*

HEB. xi. 14, 16. *And confessed they were Strangers and Pilgrims on Earth. And they that say such Things, declare plainly that they seek a better Country, that is, an heavenly: Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a City.*

2 COR. ii. 14. *Now Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.*

Second EDITION corrected and enlarged.



EDINBURGH,

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KNOW: I have been
 OF THE
 PROPOSAL TO THE AVE
 THE
 Dear Sir,
 I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the proposed alterations to the Avenue, and in reply to inform you that the same have been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
 Your obedient servant,
 J. H. [Name]

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THE

EPISTLE Dedicatory,

UNTO

The People of *Wiltoun* Parish, my Flock.

Dearly Beloved,



Ho' the Business of our everlasting Salvation be the greatest Concern, and of the most awful Importance; yet there is scarce any other Business among Men so generally neglected, or so indistinctly managed.

Some seldom think they have immortal Souls within them, or Souls of such Value as to deserve the Main of their Care.

Others cannot be convinced, that Sin is so horribly evil, or that their State by Nature is so wretchedly miserable, as the Word of God represents it to be.

Others that have some Thought about their Souls, and some Sense of their Estate, yet, what through Ignorance, and what through Confusion of Thought, rest only in Generals, and never come to a distinct settling of Matters between God and their Souls. Hence they can tell little, either of their present or future State, but only of a general Hope, without being able to pitch on the Grounds of their Hope.

Others again are held off by the Sense of their Unworthiness from accepting the offered Grace; saying with Distrust, what Solomon said with believing Admiration,

tion, Will God indeed dwell with Man! Will he dwell with such a sinful Man as I am!

Others apprehend, that the clearing of their State God-wards is a Matter of such Difficulty, because of the Intricacy and Deceitfulness of the Heart, as is next to being unattainable. And 'tis a Question, Whether Presumption on Mercy, when in a bad State, or little Hope of ever being in a better, has been the Ruin of most Souls: Tho' it be no Question, but the most Part of all who perish under the Gospel, make Shipwreck on the one or the other of these Rocks. And others cloathe their Religion all in Black, counting nothing so but mourning, fasting, and religious Severities; as if holy Joy and Delectation in God, were to bear no Part in true Religion. Hence a lumpish and uncheerful Service is offered to God and the Soul moves heavily and heartlessly in the Way to Heaven.

Others again, though they will make some Steps towards Religion, because pressed by some Exigency of Conscience, or some eminent Danger, or some general Apprehension of the Excellency of Religion: Yet, not being animated with the Hope of Glory, they do not put on Strength, or exert themselves; or, if their Motions be strong, yet they are not regular, because not aiming at the true Mark, but are religious at random.

This small Treatise offers some Help, such as it is, to these several Exigencies of Souls, and particularly to your Souls, Dearly Beloved, whose Necessities are mainly here considered. O may the God of all Grace bless these weak and poor Endeavours for your Salvation! And because there is as much Infidelity in the World, and perhaps lurking in some Professors Hearts, as would ascribe the most perfective Operations in our Minds, rather to any Cause, than the Spirit of God, we have taken Occasion, so far as is consistent with the Nature of this Discourse, to vindicate, in some Particulars, these spiritual Exercises, from the Despite that some would

do to them and the Spirit of Grace, the Author of them.

'Tis the building up of your Souls in Faith and Holiness, unto eternal Life, that we would fain, through Divine Assistance, aim at; and therefore have ventured upon the publishing of this, though there be nothing to recommend it to any critical Reader, except perhaps the general Purpose of it, which is to present a short View of the methodical Procedure of a gracious Soul, from his first Thoughts of setting out in the Way to Heaven, till he enter the same.

Not as if we meant to stint the Spirit of God to one Measure or Method; particularly as to the Terrors and hard Exercises here described, as introductive to the Soul's taking hold of God's Covenant. 'Tis certain, that the Lord is not tied to any set Measure, but such hard Exercises are restrained or enlarged, shortened or lengthened, as his infinite Wisdom sees most fit. But we are persuaded, that the Lord causeth Distress in every Soul, more or less, that he designs to bring to himself: And the less there is of this in the first, there is oft-times the more of it in the second Conversion. And what less upon the Matter is there in every true Conviction, without which there is no Conversion, than what is here described? Indeed some are so suddenly wrought upon by the Spirit of God, as that they have scarce Leisure to observe the several Steps, and methodical Operations of the Spirit in them, or yet the orderly Progress of their own Souls. In others the Business is lengthened out in such slow, but sure Steps, (which happens especially in educational Conversions) as that in such more remote, though apt, Connections of one Thing with another, the Progress, through the Non-attention and Unsteadiness of their Minds, is often not distinctly observed.

Yet who is a true Convert, that sees not Sin to be a horrible Evil? And sees not the dreadful Vengeance of God impending over the Head of every impenitent Sinner?

her? Or, who is the true Convert, that is not divorced in his Heart from Lusts and Idols? Or is not brought to despair of Salvation by his own Righteousness? Or does not see an absolute Need of Christ? Or is not brought to prize Christ above all Things; and admire free Grace, and consent to the Terms on which it is offered?

But to enlarge would be inconsistent with the Brevity we have studied through the whole, for your Ease and Convenience.

Dearly Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ,

That by sure Steps we may all travel Heaven-ward, till we meet together there, to our mutual and eternal Joy, is the Design, in short, of this little Book; and that the Lord may bless it for this End, is the earnest Prayer of,

Your Servant in the Work of the Gospel,

WILL. CRAWFORD.



Zion's

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Zion's TRAVELLER: O R,

The Soul's Progress to Heaven :

*In the several Steps whereby it ascends
from deep Distress and Misery to the
Heighth of Triumph and Glory.*

*The Introduction, giving a short View of Man's
State before Grace reach his Soul.*



MAN is sinful from the Womb, conceived in Sin, and brought forth in Iniquity (a). Sin is ingrained in his Nature, and twisted in his Constitution and Frame; and this through the Apostasy of Adam, our *fœderal Head*, and *natural Root*, in whose Person was the whole Stock of human Nature, which is transmitted to us as tainted in him (b). And what Child did ever more resemble his Parent, than all Adam's natural Posterity resemble him? Was Adam for trying whether or not he could be happy another Way than God had appointed and commanded? And is not this the natural Disposition of all Mankind? They are for trying whether or not the World can be a Portion, and Happiness for Souls: And so they address this and the other Creature with Passion and Fondness; and all they gain is but Loss and Harm: And after a thousand Disappointments, and frustrated
A Hopes.

(a) Psal. li. 5. (b) Rom. v. 12, 19.

Hopes, whereby 'tis apparent, That *this their Way is their Folly, yet their Posterity approve their Sayings* (a); and will make new Essays and Experiments, for the obtaining of an Happiness in worldly Things, as if none had ever been frustrated before them. Did Adam prefer sensual Pleasures to all the Consolations of God's Favour and Love? And is not this the natural Temper of all his Children? Are they not *Lovers of their sensual Pleasures more than Lovers of God* (b)? And is not this comprehensive of all Corruption and Sin; being, that the Soul's embracing the Creature instead of the Creator, is its very spiritual Pollution, whereby it goes a whoring from God? Again, The Creature's interposing, and rending the Soul from God, its only Life and Happiness; is not this the Source of all its Woes, yea, in its self comprehensive of all Wants and Miseries? Again, Did Adam run away to hide himself from the Presence of the Lord? And is not the same Spirit in all his Children? Is it not evident, that every Man by Nature hath not only lost his God, but also has no Heart to return unto him, but imagines he may be safe and comfortable, tho' estranged from God; at least, he is unwilling to believe his great Need of him, till a Word immediately from God alarm his Soul, and awaken his Fear, as it did to Adam?

O what a melancholly View here presents itself, of the deplorable State of human Nature! Man is become universally depraved, and polluted with Sin: He's vilely averse to God, and rebellious against him: He thinks nothing to affront the Majesty, and invade all the sacred Rights of the Deity, affecting to be as God. He neither values the Kindness of God, nor dreads much his Displeasure: And though he hears of the Arm of God's Power, and the Terrors of his Justice; yet, like *Leviathan*, he laughs at such Spears as would offer to pierce him: And tho' he be told of Death and Destruction, yea, that he is on the very Sides of the Pit, and Confines of Hell, nothing being between but the brittle Thread of Life, which soon may be snap't

in

(a) Psal. xlix. 13. (b) 2 Tim. iii. 4.

in Pieces; yet he flatters himself with the Thoughts of Impunity, and says, That *no Evil shall come near him, but that he shall have Peace*, tho' the Lord tells him, that *he will not spare him, but his Wrath shall smoke against him, and burn him to the lowest Hell* (a).

I. *A Thought of the Soul upon its own sad State.*

WHAT a State is this my *Soul* is in? Shall I rest in such a wretched Condition as I am in by Nature? Can I bear up under the horrible Guilt of all my Sins; a Weight which would crush me to the lowest Hell? Shall the Curse of the Law prey upon my Soul, and be eternally eating out its Vitals? Can it be easy for me to *underly* the Wrath of an Almighty God? Am I a Match for Omnipotence? Or prepared to *run against the thick Bosses of his Buckler*? Or, shall I, *saith the Soul*, rather chuse to ly eternally under the Strokes of his *Wrath*, than be obliged to him for his *Grace*? And rather than accept of the Consolations of his Love, chuse to live under the horrid Views, and ill boding Fears of his infinite Vengeance? What's thy Thoughts of these Things, O my *Soul*? Darest thou equally value the Favour and the Displeasure of the Almighty God? Is it alike to thee, whether to be eternally beloved or abhorred of the Lord? Or, whether thou be eternally joyful in Heaven, or eternally tormented in Hell? Is it all one to thee, whether the Flames of Divine Wrath shall eternally flash on thee? Or, whether thou shalt be eternally solaced with the infinitely amiable, and ravishing Countenance of the Glorious God? Or hast thou a Mind, by a Course of Impenitency, to prefer the Terrors of Reprobates, and the Torments of Devils, before all the inexpressible Joys, and Raptures of glorious Angels, and glorified Saints?

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H. When

(a) Deut. xxix. 19, 20.

II. *When the Man begins to take Thought, there will be a more stated Soliloquy with his Soul about its eternal Concerns.*

Why, O my Soul, has it been so long e'er thou hast bethought thy self in Matters that so vastly and eternally concern thee? Why hast thou never before now considered what's thy *Nature*, how great is thy *Capacity*, and how long is thy *Duration*? Art not thou a spiritual Substance, that cannot be fed with Corn, or enriched with Gold? O my precious Soul, would not Heaven, and the beholding the Divine Glory there, best suit thy Nature, and answer thy Capacities? O my immortal Soul, shalt thou not survive the Funerals of the Body, and when Death comes, take a silent and undiscerned Flight into the unseen World; being either carried by Angels into Abraham's Bosom, or else dragged by Devils into Hell? O my Soul, why hast thou not been at any suitable Care to prevent thy eternal Destruction, and to possess eternal Life and Happiness? Why hast thou not repented of Sin, fled to the Mediator, and closed with the Terms of the Covenant? Why art thou yet rolling some Sin under thy Tongue? Why is there yet some Idol thou canst not part with, or some Duty thou canst not comply with? O my Soul, wilt thou forfeit thy Happiness, and lose thy self for ever, for the Pleasures of Sin that are but for a Season? O my Soul, shall I prefer the vile Gratification of sensual Lusts before thy pure, noble, and endless Happiness? O my Soul, have I no Use for thee, but to make thee a Drudge to the Body, and a Slave to its Lusts? Is this my Kindness to thee, my better Part? Shall I venture a Soul, and lose it for ever, for the Sake of a brutish and momentary Satisfaction? Let this be far from me, to use such unnatural Cruelty to my own Soul; lest I come to wish in vain, *Would to God I had died for thee*, my Soul; I wish I had died Ten thousand Deaths for thee, my Soul, my Soul, my Soul.

III. *When*

III: *When in such a Soliloquy, Matters are presented close to the Mind by the Spirit of God, there will be a sharp Expostulation of the Soul about its former Ways.*

Why dost thou, O Man, sin against God, and wrong thine own Soul? Is this well done in thee, to scorn infinite Majesty, despise infinite Goodness, and ruin thy self eternally? If *uncreaturally* thou regardest not God, that hath made and preserved thee, yet why *unnaturally* art thou regardless of thine own self? And what should move thee to destroy thy Soul for ever? *What will it profit a Man, should he gain the whole World, and lose his Soul (a)?* What is left to a Man when his Soul is lost? Or what is gained, when the Gainer himself is eternally undone? If the Favour of God, if Communion with him in Blessedness, if eternal Happiness be lost, what hast thou after this, O my Soul? Or what Equivalent can there be for such an irreparable Loss? Can the whole World be a sufficient Compensation for the Loss of a Soul? Can it keep out of Hell? Try first if it can keep off Sickness, or hinder the Strokes of Death. Can it give any Relief or Refreshment to the Damned? Why then could *Dives* neither buy nor borrow a Drop of cold Water to cool the Tip of his Tongue, that was tormented in these Flames (b)? Or can it purchase a Room among the Blessed? But let that Man perish, and his Money with him, who thinks any Gift of God, much more his great Gift of eternal Life, can be purchased with Money (c). Or losing Heaven, and all its Happiness, will worldly Gain, or worldly Honour, or worldly Pleasure, be a sufficient Equivalent for that irretrievable Loss? But knowest thou not, O my Soul, since Man was placed of old upon the Earth, that the triumphing of the Wicked is short, and the Joy of the Hypocrite is but for a Moment; for tho' his Excellency mount up to the Heavens, and his Head reach unto the Clouds; yet he shall perish for ever like his own Dung; and they which have

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seen

(a) *Matth. xvi. 26.* (b) *Luke xvi. 24.* (c) *Acts viii. 20.*

seen him, shall say where is he (a)? They spend their Days in Wealth, and in a Moment go down to the Grave (b). And when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away, his Glory shall not descend after him (c).

But were it true, O my Soul, which is yet impossible, that the Profits of the World, and the Pleasures of Sin were as durable as the Joys of Heaven; yet, O how absurd and stupid, as well as impious and horrid, would it be, to prefer the Service of Sin before the Service of God, and chuse rather to graze among Beasts, than ascend into Heaven, and partake of eternal and angelick Delights!

IV. *The Soul in Horror and Confusion, because of its Sin and Folly.*

What is this! *says the now awakened Soul: To be honourable here, and miserable hereafter; rich here, and for ever rejected hereafter; jolly and merry here, and howling and schrieking among the Damned for ever hereafter! O Terrors! O Horrors! And what less can I look for, while in this State, than the fiery Indignation of an angry God? And do not the lightening Flashes of Terror already flee in my Face, and the very Sparks of Hell compass me about? For how extreme is my Fault in affronting the Most High God, in sullyng his Glory, and trampling upon his Laws? And how black is the Pollution wherewith my Soul is stained? O what Pride; what Earthliness; and what Sensuality have reigned in my Soul! O how horrible is the Vigor of my Sins, and how envenomed has the Malignity of my Heart been! Who could have imagined that such Folly could be bound up in Man's Heart? Certainly my Heart, says the awakened Sinner, has been a Span of the foulest Abominations, and brimful of the Poison of Hell: Dragons and Devils have dwelt there, Owls and Satyrs have danced there, and unclean Birds have nested there. Unto me there belongs nothing but Shame and Confusion (d),*
Horror

(a) Job xx. 4, 5, 6, 7. (b) Job xxi. 13. (c) Psal. xlix. 13.
(d) Dan. ix. 8.

The Soul's Progress to Heaven.

7

Horror and Misery. O, my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my Face to thee, O God, for mine Iniquities are increased over mine Head, and my Trespas is grown up unto the Heavens (a). My Sins are as a heavy Burden, they are too heavy for me (b).

V. A very rueful Reflection of Soul, and a wishing to retract its Faults.

O it cuts me to the Quick, says the broken-hearted Sinner, with bitter and afflictive Resentment, that I should have so vilely debased my Soul, in preferring corruptible Flesh to incorruptible Happiness: Or in preferring Earth to Heaven. And as if all this were too little, I have preferred such a vile Thing as Sin, before the infinitely amiable God, and lovely Redeemer. O impious and horrid to the uttermost! I have been a Traitor to God, and mine own Soul, I have been a Fool, a mad Man, a Beast before thee, O Lord. O that it had been otherwise with me! How happy had I been, if I had rather been suffering than sinning, says the penitent Soul! I retract my Faults; and O that I could undo them! O that I could weep them out by brinish Tears; wring them out by bitter Sorrow, and rid my self from them by heart-rending Contritions! But alas! saith the contrite Soul, I am appalled with Sin, as a Burden above my Strength, and as a Load so nailed to my Bones, as that I cannot disburden my self; it sinks as a venomied Dart in my Soul, and the Arrows of God's Wrath stick with it. Oh! I am amazed and astonished to think how light and jolly I have been, when the horrible Pollution of original Sin hath stained all the Powers and Faculties of my Soul! And when by my innumerable actual Transgressions, I have infinitely provoked God, and brought my Soul within a Hair's Breadth of Hell! Oh! I see now, and detest that infinite Stupidity and Sorishness, that possessed my Soul, when bold and ventrous to dishonour God, violate his Law, and incur his infinite Displeasure!

A 4

Oh,

(a) Ezra ix, 6. (b) Psal. xxxviii. 4.

Oh, what would I not give, that this had never been! And now, what would I not do, and what would I not suffer, that my Sins might be altogether *obliterate*; might not only be *pardoned*, but also *nullified*; and might not only not *reign*, but not *be*!

VI. *The awakened Soul cannot believe that such Distresses of Conscience, upon Apprehension of Sin and Misery, are melancholly Vapours.*

Is it not evident, *saieth the thoughtful Soul*, that Men of the most sober Reason, and penetrating Judgment, have felt these inward Terrors, because of Sin; as *Job* (a), *Heman* (b), and *David* (c), whose ruddy Cheeks, and Inclination to Musick, seem to be Symptoms rather of a sanguine than a melancholick Constitution. And is it not agreeable to the highest Reason, that it should be so? Who is the Person that allows himself to think on the Majesty, Holiness, and Justice of God, who is not convinced that there is an extreme Malignity, and an eternal Indecency in sinning against him? Or is not affected with the infinite Fault, the vile Pollution and horrible Guilt there is in affronting the Divine Majesty? Sure it is only these who think not at all, or think but slightly, who can think it a light Thing to offend God, and break his Laws. And how often hath it happened in the Experience of gracious Souls, that these inward Terrors have seized them on a Sudden, and again been remov'd in an Instant, Peace and Joy succeeding in their Room? How could this be ascribed to Melancholy, which comes not to a Height in an *Instant*, and abates not but *gradually*, according as its Causes are removed?

Again, The Sorrow, Amazement, and Agony our blessed Saviour endured, though without *Desperation*; are they not a most certain Evidence, that there may be an inward Impression of Wrath on the Soul, which cannot be ascribed to Melancholy. Hence,

VII. *Such*

(a) Job vi. 4. (b) Psal. lxxxviii. 15. (c) Psal. xxxviii. 4.

VII. *Such reasonable and well-grounded Fears cast the Soul into a deep Plunge of Thoughtfulness.*

O my Soul, says the Man, where art thou, if thy Sins are not pardoned, nor the Wrath of Almighty God, due for Sin, pacified? Art thou not sinking into the Bottom of all Calamity, yea into the Abyss of endless Misery, even *that Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone for ever* (a). How canst thou avoid the same? For look up, thou seest Heaven gathering nothing but Blackness, Darkness, and horrible Tempests over thy Head. Look down, thou seest nothing but Fire and Brimstone, and a bottomless Pit to lodge in for ever. Look backward, there is Sinfulness from the Womb, and a Train of Evils from thy Youth up. Look forward, there is a Death to die, and an awful Tribunal to appear at. Look inward, there is a Conscience sitting on the Throne maintaining God's Sovereignty, Power and Terribleness in the Soul. Look outwards to this lower visible Creation, all of it, with thy self, is groaning under the overwhelming Weight and Misery of Sin.

O my Soul, thy Misery is extreme; the Relief thereof can admit of no Delay. Thou canst not live in such a Case as this. Thou canst not live under the Guilt, Reign, and Power of Sin: How canst thou live without an Interest in God, the Fountain of Life; and without an Interest in Christ, the Prince of Life? Thou hast nothing in such Circumstances that thou canst live upon, and nothing to answer thy Wants. Thou wantest to have a guilty Soul pardoned, a dead Spirit quickened, a polluted Heart cleansed, a distressed Conscience quieted, a fainting Spirit strengthened, and a perishing Soul saved. How then canst thou rest, where there is nothing of this? Who can be at Ease, who finds himself not only bound over to Hell, but also carrying a Hell in his Bosom? Can all the Creatures, with all their Smiles, refresh a Soul when God doth frown upon it? The Sense of an angry God doth sour and blast

(a) Rev. xx. 10.

blast Comforts, and envenom and imbitter Crosses. What can attend the Man, who hath no Favour to look for at the Hand of God? What, but a melancholly Train of Fears, Terrors, and amazing Agonies? And what can he have in Prospect, but the frightful Views of an horrible and astonishing Eternity? O alas, saith the Soul, is there no Hope for me, *but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries* (a)? Is there nothing for me, but to live continually in Fear, lest, by the Death of the Body, my Soul should slide into Hell, there to abide till the Body follow? And what else is to be look'd for! God is the Supreme Ruler and Governor of the World; all the Rights of Government, and therefore the Rights of Punishing are in his Hand. He is the *Lord God Omnipotent* that reigneth, therefore he hath a Power equal to his Right. *Glory and Majesty* belong unto him, which being trampled upon by Sin, it cannot deserve less than severe Animadversion. 'Tis one of the most beautiful Perfections of God, that he is the *Holy One of Israel*, and of *purser Eyes than to behold Iniquity* (b): And what can be expected from all this, but terrible Punishment to the Sinner? *justice* likewise is one of the essential Dignities of the Divine Nature: And if it belongs to it to give every one his Due, and *to render to every one according to his Works* (c); What then can the Sinner expect but Woe and Misery for ever? The *Law* also, that threatens Sin with eternal Death, is *holy, just and good*; and 'tis also of a large spiritual Extent, and lays under its Curse, not only gross external Commissions, but even the most secret Workings of Lust or Worldliness, or Pride in the Heart. How can the Soul then find any Hope in itself! *Conscience* dogs a Man at his Heels, and cites him to answer at the Throne of God; likewise it becomes as a thousand Witnesses, so that there is no shifting or denying of its Charge: 'Tis God's Deputy also in our Bosom, that passeth Sentence against the Soul on God's Side, and for the Vindication of his Honour

(a) Heb. x. 27. (b) Hab. i. 13. (c) Rom. ii. 6.

Honour and Rights: 'Tis also a severe Executioner of the Divine Justice in buffeting, smiting, racking and tormenting the Soul. And the *All seeing Judge*, whose Eyes are brighter than the *Sun* in the Firmament, sees me through and through. There is not a Thought, nor a Circumstance of a Thought, but lo, he knows it altogether. And he sees there is no less than *Atheism* and *Blasphemy* in every Sin; since no Sin can be named, wherein there is not a doubting, or rather a denying, that God is our supreme Sovereign and chief Good. He sees that even these called Sins of Infirmary have an infinite Malignity in them. If there's little of Divine Meditation, he sees the Unsuitableness and Aversion of the Heart to Divine Things, that's the Cause of it. If the Things of this World ly nearer our Heart than the Concerns of God's Glory, he sees the Idolatry there is in this. If there is little Heart-melting for Sin, he sees the Infidelity and Hatred of God there is in this. If there is much Ingratitude for Mercies, he sees the Pride and Contempt of God there is in this. If we are impatient and unsubmitive to the Will of God, he sees the Rebellion to the Divine Majesty there is in this. My Sin, then says the awakened Soul, is out of Measure sinful, and I see my self to be lost and undone! O, where shall I find Redemption and Life to a poor dead and lost Soul! Who can deliver me from the horrible Gloom of eternal Darkness and Death? Should I range through the Universe, and pass through all the Ranks of created Beings in it, and extract all the Life and Spirit that's in them; Can any of them separately, or all of them conjunctly, give Life to a dead Soul? O! no, no. There is none of them all a *God to kill or make alive*: None of them are proportioned to the Wants, or commensurate to the Duration of my precious and immortal Soul: Nor can they come with a Price in their Hand to deliver me from going down to the Pit, whence there is no Redemption. What! And must I then think of nothing but Destruction for evermore? Have I no other Prospect but to dwell for ever with devouring Fire, and everlasting Burning;

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Is there no Way of bettering my Condition ? Is my State altogether helpless and hopeleſs ? Ah Lord, my Heart ſhrinks at the Thought, and my Blood chills at the very mentioning of this. Hence,

VIII. The awakened Sinner caſts about in his Thoughts, how, if poſſible, he may eſcape.

Shall Man be made in vain, ſaith the awakened and inquiſitive Soul ? Or be in a worſe State eternally, than if he had never been ? Is he made only to wander up and down, and while out a few Years in eating and drinking, in Chace of Shadows, and in Queſt of Vanities and Deluſions ; and then after a few Turns in the World, go down to the Pit, whence there is no Redemption for ever ? Shall a whole Tribe of the Creation be utterly loſt ? Shall only Man, Man at whoſe Make there was ſuch Conſultation and ſuch Contrivance, and who was made the Lord-deputy of this lower World ; Shall only he, of all the different Ranks of Creatures, be left hopeleſs and helpless ? we hear of a happy Place above, where there is no Death, no Pain, no Wearineſs, no melancholly Muſings, no abſent Good, no preſent Evil, no ſad Tidings in the Day, no diſmal Viſions in the Night, no Scenes of Miſery and Horror, no wicked World to beguile us, no Satan to bubble or ſurprize us, no Sin to ſtain us, no Shame to confound us : And ſhall a whole Race of intelligent immortal Creatures be eternally baniſhed from this, and go down to Hell, and remain among the diſmal Shades below ? Where all is Night without any Day, and all is Sorrow without any Comfort ; where Diſpair fills their Minds, and Horror fills their Sight ; where there is the dread Realm of Darkneſs, and where Sorrow, Horror, Anguiſh, Diſpair, and all that breeds Pain, dwell for ever ; where Fiends hiſs, Ghoſts howl, and Devils yell for ever and ever. O the dread Horrors of the infernal State ! O the dreary Scenes of Hell's dark Regions ! 'Tis a diſmal dolorous Realm ! 'Tis ſhuddering to think of it ! And is there no Way poſſible for our Relief. Hence,

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IX. *The Soul deeply anxious in such a great and weighty Concern, and turning its Thoughts several Ways to obtain Satisfaction, perhaps will, in Humility and profound Adoration, plead and represent at the Throne of God, "O blessed Lord, is it*
" *not possible, that a Wisdom that is infinite can*
" *find out a Way of relieving Mankind from the*
" *Power, Guilt, and ruining Effects of Sin, without*
" *any Slur upon any of thine Attributes at all, or*
" *any Loss to their Glory.*

O holy One of *Israel*, I know there are of thine Attributes, which might be glorified without saving a Man. Thy *Justice* can be glorified, in a steady, calm and unalterable Purpose, that all the Sins of Men shall be answered with a Measure of Punishment proportionable to their Demerit. Thy *Equity* can be glorified, in connecting Evil with Evil, penal Evil with moral Evil, by an indissoluble Chain. Thy *Holiness* can be glorified, in testifying to all the World, how ill it comports with thy Nature to dwell with any Thing that is impure, by banishing Sinners eternally from thy Presence. Thy *Wisdom*, in shewing, that tho' thou hast no Delight in the Misery and Ruin of thy Creatures, which rather thou enclines to behold with Compassion; yet if the Ends of thy Government be a greater Good than our Ease, that must rather be chosen than this. And it must also appear, that thy Divine *Authority* must not go for nothing.

And these Attributes thou canst not deny. Thou cannot cease to be a holy and a just God, and a righteous Governor of the World. Thou cannot but be a God of Knowledge, and by thee Actions must be weighed. Thou cannot but detest what is infinitely contrary to thy Nature. And thou cannot but see and observe the unmixable Differences between Equity and Iniquity in thy Dealings, and proceed accordingly.

And I desire to acknowledge and adore thee in all these Perfections of thy essential Wisdom, thy essential

Justice and Holiness, and thy essential Authority and Rights. These are thine Attributes, O Lord, wherein thou art gloriously exalted. They are essential to thee: and O let them all be glorified! We desire not to pluck any of these Jewels from thy Crown of Glory. Thou art great, good, amiable and adorable in every one of thy Excellencies; and let them be eternally ascribed to thee! Nor could thou be the Object of the Love, Desire, Delight and Joy of any loyal Creature, if destitute of any one of them. And therefore, O let the Majesty, Greatness, Justice, and Holiness of God, be magnified for ever!

But blessed Lord, are these Perfections in thee in the same Manner, as the Semblances of them are in Men? Can our narrow Apprehensions, that are confin'd to so narrow a Sphere, take in all the Rights of God's Government, all the Rules of his Holiness, or all the Measures of his Justice?

And these Perfections not being the same Things in thee as in Man, and thy Thoughts not being as our Thoughts, nor thy Ways as our Ways, but thou hast other Rules to walk by than we know of, and another Model of Righteousness: For all our Measures of Justice hath a Relation to a Superior; and hence, though in all distributive Justice among Men, Punishment ought to fall only on the Head of the Offender, yet may it not be otherwise with God? Is it not possible, that there may be a *Commutation* or a *Substitution* of something in the Place of a Sinner? And something in Value so precious as might be sufficient to save and vindicate the Rights of Divine Government, tho' guilty Men, at least some of them, be spared. May not this be in his Government, who is infinitely wise, and infinitely sovereign, as well as infinitely just and holy?

But then, tho' it should be conceived in the general, That a *Substitution* of something else in the Room of the lost Sinner, in order to his Salvation, is possible from the Wisdom of God, as well as necessary from his Justice; yet what can be thought upon as sufficient for the same? And here all created Invention would soon

soon be nonplust. For can it be effected by the Sacrifice of Thousands of Lambs? But how is it possible that the Blood of Bulls and Goats can take away Sin? Can Rivers of Oil, or a large Quantity of Soap or Hyssop be thought sufficient? But what can these do, as pertaining to the Conscience, and the cleansing of the same. Can the best of God's Saints be admitted as a Sacrifice for our Sins? But how can they carry away other Men's Sins, when they cannot bear up under their own; who tell *their Iniquities are a heavy Burden too heavy for them to bear.* Will a Sacrifice of our First-born be admitted? But where shall be found the Lamb that is without Blemish? But may not Angels, the whole Species of them at least, step in, and offer something of such Merit as to purchase Redemption for us? But all possible Obedience being the eternal Debt that all rational Creatures owe to their Creator, if they can only pay their own Debt, how is it possible they could supererogate or spare any Thing to satisfy or merit for us?

And now, dare it at last enter into our Thought, that one of the *ELOHIM*, one of the sacred Three might interpose and do something imputable to us, which might be sufficient for our Redemption? This is truly what we could not conceive, and durst not expect. But after all, dare we deny that 'tis possible? Would it not be a Thing worthy of his infinite *Wisdom*, to step in when all other Refuge fails, and where all created Wits are at their Wit's End? And can a *Mercy* that is boundless be bound up by any Forfeiture of ours? Or can any Thing be too hard for the *Power* of God? Should One of the sacred Three interpose in this? Which of the Divine Attributes could this contradict? Not his *Holiness*, when he testifies his Abhorrence of Sin, by abolishing it, as well as punishing the same. Not his *Justice*, if all its sacred Rights are vindicate in a Way that makes it shine in its *Oricncy* and Brightness, without the Clouds of Darkness and Terror. Not its *Sovereignty*, if 'tis extended as absolutely and infinitely as it is in him, so as by it to *make Vessels of Honour* as

well as Dishonour (a), and to shew itself in Acts of Grace. Not his rightful *Authority*, if by a gracious Condescension he recover his Right over a whole Tribe that were turned to be a rebellious Crew, and had renounced *totally* their Allegiance to him. Not his *Majesty*, if it be revered and worshipped, instead of being only dreaded. Not *his Power*, when as much of the Energy thereof is exerted in quickning dead Souls, as in stretching out the Heavens, and laying the Foundations of the Earth.

X. *The Soul being pressed by the great Evils it feels or fears, and being in deep Thoughtfulness about its eternal Estate, draws yet nearer, and in deep Humility presents such a Pleading at the Footstool of God's Throne: "Blessed Lord, a Way of vindicating thy Justice, Holiness and Authority, without suffering a whole Tribe of rational Beings to perish for ever, is not only possible, but 'tis actually found out in thy infinite Wisdom; and would it not then be good for thee to save us?"*

Behold I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord! O Great and Good! If it is not only possible for One of the ELOHIM, or sacred Three, to step in and offer something for our Relief, but also if One of them hath actually done so, will not his Deed be sufficient? Sin is a great and enormous Evil; but this Evil can never be more than infinite. If therefore a Person of infinite Dignity hath interposed to lay down his Life, and bear the Punishment due to Sin, is not this an infinite Punishment? And is it not sufficient at once to testify how infinitely Sin is evil, and also to atone for the same! The Evil of Sin lies in its Contrariety to the Nature and Perfections of God: And what Evil there is in this, could never be fully apprehended by any Punishments inflicted on a mere Creature, let them be ever so long, let them be even eternal. But if a Divine Person hath sustain'd the Punishment that Sin deserves:

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As this becomes infinite Punishment, proportionable to the infinite Evil of Sin, so it gives another View of the Holiness and Justice of God to Angels and Men, than ever otherwise they could have attained. And O great Jehovah! Is not this sufficient to satisfy the Demands of these Attributes of thine, and to vindicate the Glory of them for ever?

And if it is the Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, that hath achieved so great a Work as the Salvation of Mankind; Is not his Deed assuredly acceptable to thee? O great Jehovah! Certainly thou art well pleased with the Work of thine own Son; thy only Son, the Son of thy Love; thy consubstantial and co-essential Son; who hath *always been rejoicing before thee; and had his Delights with the Sons of Men (a)*, and came down from Heaven to testify that *God is Love (b)*; *original Love*; and that he himself is *incarnate Love*; and that thy Heart is as his Heart full of Tenderness and Love. Was it not the Father that sent his Son unto the World upon the very Errand of reconciling together an intense vehement Love to perishing Mankind, with an inflexible Regard to the absolute Purity, Justice and Perfection of the Divine Nature? Yea *therefore doth the Father love him, because he laid down his Life for his Sheep (c)*.

O! let not the Lord be angry with me if I yet speak. If this Son of God becomes incarnate by joining himself personally with our Nature, may not his Deed become imputable to us? *The Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us (d)*. And being God and Man, cannot he act for both, be entrusted by both, and consult the Honour and Interest of both? If Christ is Man, 'tis Man that hath fulfilled the Law in him. And if he is God also, then there is an overflowing Merit in his Obedience, imputable and communicable to Man. Had a Service or Suffering been required of the holiest Angels, or the most bright and shining Seraphim, that might be imputable to sinful Men, they would have soon a-

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swered

(a) Prov. viii. 30. (b) 1 John iv. 16. (c) John x. 17. (d) John i. 14.

Answered with the *wise Virgins*, Matth. xxv. We have no Grace to spare, we cannot supererogate for the Profit of others. But Christ, the Son of God, having taken on him our Nature, and substitute himself in our Room, and therein satisfied what Justice could exact of us, and having freely and voluntarily done so: He having undertaken it who is Master, not only of his own Creatures, and Master of his own Graces, but Master also of his own Life; and who also had Power ample enough to break through the Sufferings he undertook, and to resume his Life and former Condition, yea acquire a new Glory by it as Mediator, which he had not before: May not a poor broken-hearted Sinner rest on this as imputable to us, and pleadable for our Faith, Hope and Comfort, unto eternal Life? Christ Jesus, the Son of God, by the most just, wise, and merciful Designation of the Father, and by his own most obedient and voluntary Subjection, being one with his People in a manifold, secret, mysterious Union; and having a full Power to lay down his Life, and to take it up again; and having actually laid it down a Sacrifice for our Sins, and a Ransom for our Souls; May we not plead now for the Imputation of this? Plead in particular, that God, without any Wrong to himself, Wrong to his Justice, or Wrong to the Dignity of his Government, may now cast a compassionate and favourable Eye upon Mankind, repair the Ruins Sin hath made, and send his mighty Spirit into our Hearts, to renew, sanctify and rule them, and so give us a Fitness, as well as a Right to the Enjoyment of his Favour, and the eternal Life that lies in the same?

And if One of the sacred Three hath undertaken our Redemption, and to bring about the Pardon of Sin; if he is the Son of God, and also the Son of Man, and thereby his Undertaking is both acceptable to God and imputable to Man, then I'll creep near the Foot-stool of thy Throne, and humbly say to the Majesty of Heaven, Would it not be good in thee to pardon and save us?

Blessed Lord, would it be good for thee to despise *the Work of thy Hands*? Thy People use to reason and plead

plead upon this Argument, *That God hath made them;* and strengthen their Faith and Fervency in Prayer by this very Argument, *For sake not the Work of thine own Hands,* Psal. cxxxviii. 8. especially such a special curious and noble Piece of Work as the human Kind. The People of God use to plead with him upon this very Argument in their deepest Distress, *Isa. lxiv. 8. But now, O Lord, thou art our Father, we are the Clay, and thou art the Potter, and we are all the Work of thine Hand, be not wroth very sore, O Lord. Wilt thou be angry with thy Work? Lord, be angry at the Works of Sin, and destroy the Works of Satan; but do not destroy the Works of thine own Hand, even the Spirits which thou hast formed in Man, in the midst of him. Is not this Plea, Isa. xlv. 11. represented, as having a Kind of Command upon God? Thus saith the Holy One of Israel, thy Maker, Ask of me Things concerning my Sons, and concerning the Work of my Hands, command me.* While we come to God under the Notion only that we are the Work of his Hands; and, for this very End, that he may preserve his own Work, we may have any Thing from him. If we indeed come to him, and propose, that he may spare and preserve the Works of Sin, or the Works of the Devil in us, we can have nothing of this granted: For, *if we regard Sin in our Hearts, he will not hear us (a).* But if we are for preserving in us only what is God's Work in us, this he cannot deny; his Inscription is upon it; and name but it, and nothing else, our Petitions are as a Law to him. O wonderful! How strange is the Plea! There is but one Argument stronger, if stronger can be than this, There is, I say, but one Argument stronger next to the Glory of the Divine Attributes among all the Topicks of Faith, and that never fails us;

And 'tis this, that Christ hath redeemed us. And, Lord, would it be good for thee to let thine own Son lose all the Travel, Pains and Cost he was at, about our Redemption, as would be the Issue if poor Sinners, and willing to return, were not saved? The Son of

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God

(a) Psal. lxi. 18.

God did take a great Journey to save us. He came down from Heaven to Earth to seek and save lost straying Souls. He earnestly contested with a perishing World. He died a bloody, painful, shameful, and accursed Death, to pay the Debt of his People. He arose again from the Dead, bringing up his Blood with him into the Holiest of Holies, and there exerciseth the Office of everlasting Priesthood. And shall all this Travel and Pains of the Mediator's Soul be in vain? Shall his Blood be as Water spilt on the Ground? Shall Christ, the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God, be thought to have shed his Blood in vain? Shall there be a Frustration of the whole Work of Man's Redemption, so heroically atchieved and executed with such irresistible Strength? Let this be far from thee, O Lord, *Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right (a)?*

Would it be good that Christ the Son of God should lose all the Glory of his Mediatorial Office? Why did Christ take our Law-Place and Room? Why was the Sun of Righteousness eclipsed? Why did Justice reach him in our Stead? Why, but that for all his Labours he might have a redeemed People, as a Seed to serve him? And that he might have a peculiar Crown to himself, as Lord, Mediator and Redeemer; whereby all Men are obliged to *honour the Son, as they honour the Father (b)*. But how could this Design be attained, if Sin were not pardoned, and the Sinner freely justified by his Blood?

XI. *The thoughtful Soul proceeding in his earnest Enquiries into the Grounds of Faith and Hope, sees the Glory of God eminently concerned in the Redemption of lost Mankind: and hence begs Leave, in all Humility, to represent and plead at the Foot stool of God's Throne: "O blessed Lord, is not the Business*
" of Man's Redemption so well laid in our Imma-
" nuel, as that now all the Divine Perfections shine
" in their greatest Brightness, in the Device and
" Accomplishment of this great Salvation."

And here the serious and inquisitive Soul may, with awful and solemn Adoration, lay several Things before the Lord.

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(a) Gen. xviii. 25. (b) John v. 23.

Blessed Lord, Is not the Glory of thy manifold Wisdom more discovered in our Redemption than ever otherwise it could be seen? Where were there ever heard tell of greater Riches, and Depths of the Wisdom of God, than in finding out a Way to Heaven between the Wrath of God and the Sin of Man? Here a Wisdom is to be seen that knows how to bring the greatest Good out of the greatest Evil, and how to make Death, the Wages of Sin, to be the Destruction of Sin. A Wisdom, that hath made it visibly to be seen, what great Things infinite Power can effect; how low infinite Love can stoop; how high infinite Grace can exalt; how deep infinite Counsel can contrive; how Mercy can be manifested to the full, and Justice and Judgment yet shine in their Mid day Brightness. O how amiably and gloriously, through Christ, doth the manifold Wisdom of God appear in the Church to all Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places (a). O the Depths of the Riches of Wisdom, and the Knowledge of God!

Doth not the Glory of thy Holiness, shine more brightly in the Incarnation of the Son of God, and his Sufferings for the Sins of Men, than ever it could have done otherwise, and that to the eternal Admiration and Transport of Angels as well as Men? How could they have learned in any other Instance but this, that God's Holiness is so infinitely pure and immaculate, as that Sin is as much hated by him, as his own Son is loved? Holiness is the very Brightness of God's Face: It attracts the Eyes, the Hearts, and Ravishments of Men and Angels. And here in the Dispensation of the Gospel, through this Constitution of Grace in Immanuel, 'tis evidently seen, *That he is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*; that he is *the Holy One of Israel*; that *there is none holy as the Lord*; that Sin is the Evil he hates, and cannot but punish, were it even only imputed, and not inherent, and tho' the Imputation thereof should be on his own Son. What Wonder is it now, if the Cherubims, seeing this Glory shall cry, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts*: Or if *the Heavens shall own they are*

(a) Eph. iii. 10.

are not pure in God's Sight; or the holy Angels there shall cover their Faces before him, as ashamed of their Purity and Holiness, when compared with God's!

Even thy *Justice*, O Lord, is more fully and gloriously displayed in all the essential and inviolable Rights thereof, by the Substitution and Satisfaction of an incarnate God in the Room and Stead of lapsed Man, than ever otherwise it could have been seen. As thou, O Lord, *sits on the Throne of thy Holiness*, so *Justice and Judgment are the Dwelling-place of thy Throne* (a): And if Justice in God be like his other Attributes, if its infinite, as they are, it can never be seen in its due Glory and Rights, as by an infinite Punishment. And where is the Creature that merely is so, that can sustain an infinite Punishment? So that of all that ever suffered for Sin, 'tis only JESUS CHRIST that could say, *Father, I have glorified thy Name* (b). A serene Veneration of the Justice of God is eternally pleasing, composing, and delighting to all the loyal Spirits above: And is not the inflexible Justice of God, the sacred Regard he hath to himself, and the Honour of his Government, and his serene Dislike of Sin, more gloriously displayed in the Incarnation and Sufferings of his own Son, than in Thousands and Ten thousands being hurled into Hell?

O great Jehovah, 'tis fit that thy *Sovereignty* and unlimited Dominion over all should be eternally owned, worshipped and adored. There is nothing more awfully revered in Heaven, as it ought to be, than the Sovereignty and absolute Dominion of God: And was it ever more manifested than in the Gospel-Scheme? Divine Sovereignty must correspond to his infinite Right: According to this, as there are in a great Man's House, not only Vessels of Silver and Gold, but also of Wood and Earth, thou canst and dost of the same Lump make Vessels either to Honour or Dishonour. And a Sovereignty that is absolute and infinite, must extend to Acts of Grace, as well as of Power; And where are there such stately Steps of the Divine Sovereignty, as in the Work of our Redemption by the Son of God, who suffered, that

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(a) Psal. xlvii. 8. and lxxxix. 14. (b) John xvii. 4.

we might reign, who justifies us freely by his Blood, and bestows many Blessings on Mankind, when he was Debitor to none.

And, O blessed Jehovah, thy Love to Mankind had lien eternally under Suspension and Restraint, if thine own Son had not laid down his Life to take off the Restraint. 'Tis in this, that God commended his Love, above all Things, that while we were Sinners, Christ died for us (a). And of no other Instance of Divine Goodness can it be said, but this, That this is as far as even the Love, the very infinite Love of God himself can go, when God spared not his own Son, but freely gave him for us all (b). For, O great and gracious God, what could thou give more than thine own Son? And O consubstantial Son of God, what couldst thou give more than thy self, thy noble and superexcellent Self? Here is to be seen Goodness to the uttermost, Love in its Perfection! In this verily was the Love of God perfected (c). Nor are there any higher Notes of Praise among all the Inhabitants of Heaven, or any Thing that can cause greater Trances, Extacies and Raptures among them, than their eternal Songs of the Love of God manifested in Immanuel. Is it not this, that causes many a pleasant and rapturous Story of the electing Love of God, in having a Consultation of Love, and a Plot of Grace about lapsed Mankind, even from everlasting? And many a pleasant Song of redeeming them out of every Tongue, Kindred and Nation, from the Grave, Hell, and all the Powers of Darkness? And the Glory, the Wonder, the Joy of all this Grace, Goodness, and Love, will not be confined only to one Race of happy Spirits, such, I mean, as have dwelt in Flesh, but it runs through all Heaven, and affects all the Angels and Cherubims of Glory.

Even Majesty itself hath a Relation to Vouchsafements of gracious Condescension. There may be Terror at Greatness, but its kindly Respect, and humble Veneration, that hath to do with Majesty. And 'tis in Christ that the Holy One of Israel is represented as High and

Lowly

(a) Rom. v. 8. (b) Rom. viii. 32. (c) : John ii. 5.

Lofty in his condescending to dwell in the humble and contrite Heart (a).

And again, 'tis in the Work of our Redemption, through the Son of God, that the *Mercy* of God is eminently displayed: Which, tho' a Divine Attribute, had never seen the Light, nor been worshipped and adored for ever, unless Christ had manifested it. But that *the Day spring from on high hath visited us, this is through the tender Mercy of our God (b)*; and so 'tis now the proclaimed Name and Glory of God, *The Lord God merciful and gracious (c)*.

In all Humility I would represent to thee, O Lord, that the Way of relieving Mankind from the ruining Effects of Sin by a God incarnate, as it sets off the Glory of all the Divine Attributes more than ever otherwise they could be seen; so, in a special Manner, it manifests the Glory of a God that is One in Three, and Three in One. It not only shews the Glory they have all in common, in the Manifestation of the essential Perfections of the Deity, but the Glory that is due to them in their several personal Subsistences, and their several personal Works in our Redemption. And this is that Glory of the sacred Three, which we know not how it could so well be display'd, as in the mysterious Oeconomy of the Gospel. Particularly, there is shew'd in it, That it was the Father that did hold the great Council of Heaven with the Son and the Holy Ghost about Man's Redemption: That *he so loved the World, as to send his only begotten Son into it (d)*: That *he therefore loved his Son, because he laid down his Life for his Sheep*: That *he laid Help on One that was mighty to bear it (e)*: That *it pleased the Father to bruise him; that thereby he found a Ransom*: That *he prepared a Body for him to suffer in (f)*; and that *it pleased the Father that in him all Fulness should dwell (g)*: That *he draws us to the Son by the Cords of his Love, and by the Pull of his omnipotent Arm*. Again, hereby is shewed, how the Son *loved us, and washed us in his Blood*: How he is the Light

(a) Isa. lvii. 15. (b) Luke i. 78. (c) Exod. xxxiv. 6. (d) John iii. 16. (e) Psal. lxxxix. 19, (f) Heb. x. 5. (g) Col i. 19.

Light and Life of the World, and the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sin thereof: How he hath purchased eternal Redemption for us, which we had forfeited and lost: How he offers his Grace to the Chief of Sinners: How his Grace superabounds, as Sin abounds: How fit he was for the Business; for who so fit to mend the World, as he that made it? Who could be sent by the Father, and send the Spirit, but the Person that's Middle between them? Who could repair the defaced Image of God in us, but the express Image of his Father's Person? Who could restore us to the Inheritance of Children, but the First-born of God, and Heir of all Things? And hereby is demonstrate the Glory of the Third Person, as he bestowed Gifts, beyond Measure, on the human Nature of Christ (a); as he upheld him by the Right-hand of his Righteousness (b); as he rears up our Souls to be Temples for God to dwell in (c), by enlightning, inclining, purifying, and ruling them; and, as he sanctifies and seals both Soul and Body unto the Day of Redemption (d).

XII. The serious Soul thinking now he hath Encouragement to make Application of these Pleas of Faith to himself, he draws near unto the Throne of Grace; and, in all Humility, pleads, "O great and merciful Lord, if it is for thy Glory to save lost Mankind, may not I be saved among others?"

O let not the Lord be angry, if, with others, I pray and say unto God, Do not condemn me (e): Do not forsake the Work of thine own Hands (f). There is Joy in Heaven at the Conversion of one Sinner; and this not only from their Love to a precious Soul, but also from their Regard to thy Glory. And can the Glory of Mercy and Freeness of Grace shine more brightly in the Salvation of any one Soul, than such a Soul as mine? If the Greatness of Mercy is to be estimated by the Greatness of Sin, and the Greatness of Misery, which

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(a) Matth. iii. 16. John. iii. 34. (b) Isa. xli. 10. (c) Eph. ii. 22. (d) Eph. iv. 30. (e) Job x. 2. (f) Psal. cxxxviii. 8.

it rescues from, in what Instance can Mercy be displayed more gloriously than in such a Soul as mine is? What blessed Spirit above, or what Inhabitant in Heaven can have more Reason to admire free Grace, than I, if reached with the same? Especially, if that is true, as it certainly is, which is said, *Luke vii. 47. Where much is forgiven, they will love the more, praise the more, and admire the more.* O blessed Lord, what an Act of Mercy would it be to pity and save the like of me! The less Worth in me, the more God-like Mercy will appear in helping me. O let me hear anew thy Name and thy Glory proclaimed, that *thou art the Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving Iniquity.*

O Holy One of *Israel*! may the exercised Soul say, How great, or how aggravated my Sins are in thy Sight, which I mournfully lament and resent with deep Self-abasement and Contrition; yet they cannot be greater than the Sins for which Christ hath died: Since he died for the Sins of the whole World, that is, for every Size and Enormity of Sin that hath been committed, by whatever Sorts, Capacities and Sexes of Mankind. Could an infinite Wisdom, that saw from the Tower of Eternity all the Evil that could be in the Heart and Conversation of Mankind, contrive a Remedy, and yet not provide that the Remedy should be sufficient for the Malady? The Design of the Incarnation, and Satisfaction of the Son of God, was *not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance* (a): And is there any Sin more than sinful? Thou came, blessed Jesus, not to *heal the Whole, but the Sick*: And is there any Malady above the Skill of such a wise and great Physician? So that whatever be my Sins, says the Soul; if I have a Heart to part with them, it cannot be above the Reach of Christ to save me from them.

Again, Whatever be my Sins, they cannot deserve more than an infinite Punishment; and this Christ the Son of God, and Surety for us, hath suffered, and thereby hath presented a perfect Satisfaction to the Justice of God for Sin, and a perfect Righteousness to the Judge

of

(a) *Matth. ix. 13.*

of all the Earth, for this very Purpose of being imputed to Man, and estimated on his Account. And here I desire to be taken off the natural Bottom, Posture, and Situation of my Soul, which was to work out a Happiness to myself by something of my own. O I see the Vanity and Folly of this, and disclaim it. I desire to be found only in Christ, and to renounce all mine own Righteousness, and seek Shelter and Safety only in the *Righteousness of God by Faith*; a Righteousness every Way sufficient to deliver me from my Judge, if, by Humility and Faith, I am invested with it; whatever my Sins have been, which now I am willing to renounce.

Whatever my Sins have been, they cannot exceed the Mercy of God, which graciously forgives Iniquity, Transgression and Sin. If the Evil of Sin is infinite, the Mercy of God is no less so. And whatever the Law can reveal to be a Sin, the Mercy of God reveals a Pardon for the same. The *Mercy-seat* covered the whole Ark, Exod. xxv. and was exactly to an Hair-breadth of the same Dimensions; and the Law was put in the Ark; why, but to intimate there is Mercy for the pardoning of every Sin against any Part of the Law whatsoever. Hence may a contrite Soul say, Whatever my Sins be, there is Mercy upon repenting of them, and flying to Christ. O blessed Lord, if any perish finally, it is not the Malignity of the Sin, but the Malignity of the Sinner that is the Cause of it: 'Tis not because he hath been guilty, but because he resolves to be guilty by Continuance in Sin, that a Soul is ruined: 'Tis *because they will not come to Christ, and live*. For the very Sin against the Holy Ghost is not unpardonable, because there wants Mercy large enough to pardon it; but because it refuses the Mercy that can only pardon it. If I return to the Almighty with all my Heart, and put Iniquity far from my Heart and Tabernacle, then I shall make my Supplication unto him, and he shall hear my Voice (a), and deliver me from the Pit, for he hath found a Ransom (b).

C 21

Further,

(a) Job xxiii. 23, 27. (b) Job xxxiii. 24.

Further, Whatever my Sins are, they cannot exceed the Virtue of Christ's Blood. That which is sufficient to propitiate for the Sins of the whole World, is sufficient to wash away more Sins than any one Person can be capable of. The Blood of Christ, being the Blood of God, cannot be as Water spilt on the Ground, nor be of so little Value and Efficacy, as not to blot out the greatest Sin, and cleanse the greatest Sinner. No Sin can exceed the Virtue of the Blood of God, that is of infinite Value, unless it be the Sin of rejecting and trampling upon it, by Impenitency and Unbelief. And no Sinfulness of Man can be greater than the Righteousness of a God. 'Tis a Blood that hath already washed away Scarlet Sins, crying Sins, notorious Sins, Conscience-wasting Sins. And this Fountain of Christ's Blood, as it did run under Ground from Eternity in the Covenant of Redemption between the Father and the Son, so it did burst forth near the very Birth of Time, at the first opening up of the Covenant of Grace, and is still kept open. 'Tis not a sealed Fountain, but 'tis a Fountain opened for the House of David for Sin and Uncleaness (a). And therefore what hinders me to go there and wash, and be made clean? And washed we will be from all our Abominations, if we will but be made clean.

Are not the Offers thereof made to Sinners indefinitely? And who is more sinful than I am, will the contrite Soul say? Lord, save me from my Sins. 'Tis made to them that are lost and undone; and who see themselves more lost and undone than I am. Lord, come, seek and save thy poor lost Sheep (b). 'Tis made to the Poor and Needy; And who is more needful than I am? I am poor and needy, Lord, make haste and help me (c). 'Tis an Act of Grace to the Undeserving; and who is more undeserving than I am, and who needs Grace more than I do?

O great and highly exalted God! *Heaven is thy Throne, and the Earth is thy Foot-stool*; and I would think it irreverend damnable Presumption to plead for any Thing

(a) Zech. xiii. 1. (b) Psal. cxix. 176. (c) Psal. lxx. 5.

Thing at thy Hand, but what thou can find Cause in thy self to give: But here thou can find Cause in thy self, and the Glory of all thy Attributes to help such a poor miserable Casuist as I am; for Lord, here is a Soul in a sad Plunge, even in an extreme and desperate Necessity, and would it not be to the Glory of thy *Wisdom* to come in for Relief to my Soul in such a Case as this, and to help at a dead Lift? Dost thou not use to make Man's Extremity thy Opportunity for Help and Succour? And it has been the old Way of thine ancient Servants, *when they knew not what to do, to have their Eyes upon thee (a)*; And when they could see nothing without or within themselves but what caused Terror in the Land of the Living, yet they have looked to thee and were *lightened (b)*. And may not I do so likewise? Here is a Soul that sits in Darkness and in the Shadows of Death for Want of the Application and Intimation of Pardon of Sin, and Peace with God: And would it not be to the Glory of the Riches of thy *Grace*, as well as the Ease of a troubled Spirit, so to present the Perfection of thy Sacrifice to the Soul, and the Freedom of the Imputation thereof, as to draw it, so compassed with the Terrors of Justice, to a hearty Acceptation of the Scheme of Salvation, and a voluntary Subjection to thy Government of Grace? Here is a Soul sadly complaining of felt Hardness of Heart, which it thinks hard as the nether Mill-stone, being little melted with either a Sense of Sin, or a Conviction of Righteousness: And would it not be to the Glory of thy *Power* to break this Rock in Pieces, and make it soft, tender and susceptible of Divine Impressions? Here is a polluted Soul, sensible that 'tis made loathsome with Sin; would it not be to the Glory of thy *Holiness*, to cleanse this Soul, and transform it into thine own Likeness? Here is a guilty Soul, that owes thee a Debt of Punishment: And would it not be to the Glory of thy *Justice*, to receive Payment from a good and sponorable Hand, even the Man Christ Jesus? Here is a rebellious Soul; and would it not extend the Glory of thy *Kingdom*,

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(a) 2 Chron. xx. 12. (b) Psal. xxxiv. 1.

dom, to rescue this Soul from the Hand of thine Enemies, and subdue it to thy self?

Thus the exercised Soul pleads for eternal Life. And hereby,

XIII. *A secret Hope is wrought in the Heart.*

I cannot think, *says the exercised Soul*, but there is a gracious Meaning in this to Man, sinful as he is; And who knows but the Lord may be yet gracious to me. I said indeed that my Strength and Hope is perished from the Lord, remembering my Affliction and my Misery, the Worm-wood and the Gall; and my Soul hath them still in Remembrance, and is humbled in me: But this I recall to Mind; and therefore have I Hope, because 'tis of the Lord's Mercies that I am not consumed, and because his Compassions fail not (a). And who can tell but the Lord will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce Anger, that I perish not (b)? He hath dealt graciously to many Thousands e're now, who have been, *says the Soul*, in the same Depths as I am, yet their Souls have been kept above Water in Hope.

And tho' this secret Hope be only a small glimmering Light, and in the Entrance very weak, staggering between Hope and Fear, and doubtful of the Issue, yet it so far keeps from *sinking Despondency*, as that the Soul begins to mark the Promises, which before it looked upon as being either needless by Presumption, or worthless by Despair; and made no Account of them but as common Passages, or Things it could not claim. But now the Man, having marked the Promises, begins to muse upon them, and to think with himself, O what if the Lord shew himself yet compassionate and gracious to me! O what a blessed Change would this be! Oh, if God turn from his Anger, I should not perish, but live in his Sight! But yet,

XIV. *The Soul finds itself strangely astonished with the Thought of Eternity.*

O Eternity, Eternity! How shall I do to speak of thee? Thou art as a boundless Space, where tho' one should

(a) Lam. iii. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. (b) Jonah iii. 9

should fly ever so swift, or ever so long, there is no coming nearer any Term, Point, or Period; but all is boundless, undeterminate and unmeasurable. Thou art a State that admits of neither Change or Pause for ever. Every Thing but Eternity has an End at last. As many soever as there are Stars in the Firmament, or Sands on the Sea-shore, or Hairs on the Heads of all the Children of Men, that either are or have been, or will be, yet there is a determinate Number of them: But, for Eternity, it hath neither End or Middle in it; and therefore 'tis perfectly indefinite and indeterminable: So that when the Soul hath lived Ten thousand Times Ten thousand of Millions of Myriads of Ages, it can never approach one Moment nearer the End, or nearer the Middle of Eternity. O Eternity! What can I say more of thee, but that thou art ever, ever, ever! A Duration, a Permanency of Being, a Continuation of Existence that is ever, ever, ever!

What Workings doth this Cause in my Mind, and what casting about of Thoughts, whether this boundless Duration is to be filled with Joys or Sorrows; with a pleasant Sight of the Face of God, or with horrid Visions of Devils or damned Spirits; with the refreshing Beams of the Glory of God in Heaven, or with the purpureal painful Flames of Hell. A thousand Years to Eternity is not one Drop of Water to the whole Ocean, or one small Gravel-stone in Comparison of the whole Sands; or even as a Watch in the Night, when Men are asleep, and have scarce any Perception of Duration at all; for there is still some Proportion between the least Number and the greatest, the least Duration and the greatest, if that greatest Number and greatest Duration have any Bounds at all: But in long Eternity there is not any Bounds or Measure at all. And this great, this vast Eternity is filled either with Rivers of Delight, or with Lakes of Fire and Brimstone. O what can be sufficient to alarm the immortal Spirit of Man, if this be not! and to awaken him to a great Concern about his Salvation! One serious View of Eternity is enough to amaze a poor Soul, tho' looking upon it at a Distance,

were

were it the Distance of Six thousand Years, even all the Years of this passing World; much more to be so near it, as our short and uncertain Lives put us, which set us to the very Door of Eternity: For our Age is as nothing before it, and sets us not off the Brink of endless Eternity, from the first Moment of our Lives till our Breath go out. O awful and amazing Thought!

O *Eternity, Eternity!* What shall I do to conceive of thee? Thou art too bulky and boundless for our Apprehension: For let our Apprehension stretch itself to the utmost, it can never reach nearer thy End. O *Eternity!* thou art nonplussing and confounding to our Judgment: For when it would compare thee to Ought, there is no Measure to make the Comparison with. O *Eternity!* Thou art astonishing to Invention: For there is not only no Simile to illustrate what thou art; but also the more we think to conceive of thee, the more dost thou transcend our Thoughts.

Imagination, which can start from one End of Heaven to another, and walk about the Circle of the Earth, cannot advance one Moment nearer the End, or nearer the Middle of Eternity. Let *Invention* call in for its Aid all possible Similies; let it think there are as many Millions of Millions of Years in Eternity, as ever there were Spires of Grass on the Earth, or Grains of Sand in the Sea, it cannot come nearer any Bounds or Period in Eternity. Let *Apprehension* stretch a Line to measure Eternity, it will soon find that not only the Line is too short, but that it cannot be so much as applied; there being no Proportion at all between a Duration which hath Bounds, and which therefore may be conceived, and that which hath no Bounds, and therefore is perfectly inconceivable. Let *Judgment* make a Standard, whereby it would mete out an eternal Duration, it would soon find that the longest Measure of Time it can conceive, is as far from the Length of Eternity, as the shortest Instant of Time that can be assign'd. O astonishing!

And this Eternity, this vast and boundless Eternity is stored either with Pains or Pleasures, either with intolerable

tolerable Misery, or inexpressible Happiness. Will a Man then still go on in his sinful Pursuits, and in an over-grown Love and excessive Care about worldly Things, to the Neglect of a Blessedness that lasts thro' Eternity? By what Name shall this be called? Shall it be called *Folly*? It is so, but 'tis Folly without a Comparison; there being no Man but he would labour and be diligent one Hour in his worldly Affairs, for preventing a Misery through his whole Life, and the making the rest of his Time easy and comfortable. But our whole Lives are far from bearing that Proportion to Eternity, that one Hour bears to threescore or fourscore Years. Shall it be called downright *Madness* and Distraction of Mind? It is so indeed, but to such a superlative Height as hath not a Parallel: For it doth not call for so much Pity to see Madmen busied about Trifles and Toys, as to see People having the sober Use of their Reason in all Things, but the main Thing, in all Affairs, but that of their Soul, and in all Interests, but these of Eternity. Shall it then be imputed to downright *Infidelity*, that whatever Men are taught to say of the Immortality of their Souls, and their eternal State, yet they believe not one Word about the same? But then 'tis Unbelief so gross, as that no Christian, and but few Heathens, will own this to be their Case, but will profess and avow, that the Soul is immortal, that there is a future State, and that Death enters them into the same, which yet operates as little on their Minds, and as little influences their Hearts and Lives, as if they were not only persuaded that it is not true there is a future State, but also that 'tis impossible. O how shall such Stupidity be accounted for! Unless it be that Mankind being *dead in Trespasses and Sins*, they are dead to the intellectual invisible World, and as the Dead know nothing, as little do they discern any Thing said of its Glory. O for Spiritual Life, to make us capable of apprehending Eternity! O for Spiritual Light, to enter us into a serious Thought of Eternity! O for Spiritual Sense, to be constantly influenced by the View thereof! O amazing and astonishing Eternity! Thou art hard at Hand. Suppose every

every one of us could live threescore Years and ten, or fourscore Years, yet Eternity is at our very Door. One has lived twenty of these Years, and so 'tis but fifty or sixty Years between him and Eternity. Another has lived already thirty Years, and 'tis only forty or fifty Years to his Eternity. Another has reached to forty Years, and let other forty Years pass, and be sure, they will assoon pass over as the bygone Years, and then he is swallowed up in long Eternity. Another hath lived fifty of these Years; and now the best Half of Life is over, and the rest is but the more weak and languishing Remains of Life; and 'tis but twenty or thirty Years to come, and then he finds himself in Eternity. Another is come to sixty of these Years, and then 'tis but ten or twenty Years, when comes his Eternity that never comes to an End. Another is advanced to the Length of seventy Years; and now how long has such an one to live: His Glass is near run, his Sun is near set, he has his Foot on the Border of Eternity, which is ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever without End for evermore. O that all this were as much minded and considered as 'tis known! *Lord teach us to number our Days, that we may apply our Hearts to Wisdom (a).*

O Eternity! Eternity! Eternity! Thou art either an Eternity of Death and Misery, or an Eternity of Life and Happiness. And though the Lord should require of me, saith the thoughtful Soul, to spend a thousand Years in Fastings, in Watchings, in Hunger, in Cold, in Dens and Caverns of the Earth; would I have Reason to complain of this, as being too much for the avoiding an Eternity of Misery, and for the attaining an Eternity of Happiness? O if there be the least Offer or Hope of the same, let me have a Part in it! And hence,

XV. *The alarmed Soul rises to earnest Importunity, and strong Cries to the Throne of God for eternal Life and Salvation.*

O what is this I have been last thinking upon! There is an Eternity, and 'tis an Eternity either of Life or Death, either

either of Misery or Happiness! In an Eternity of Death they are dying for ever, but cannot die, tho' they wish for the same: They ly gasping for ever in the Throws of Death, in these gloomy Regions, where Darkness and Horror have their Seat, and where no dawning of Light or Hope shall arise for ever, and where never Ease or Pleasure are to be found. In an Eternity again of Life, they are where God and the Lamb appear in all their Glory, and God Immanuel imparts all his Fullness, and where Life, and Love, and Joy, spring up in their Souls for ever. How dreadful is it to think on Hell, where God's Anger burns, and doleful *weeping and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth* is heard in all their Dwellings! And how pleasant to hear of Heaven, where Health, Melody and Joy is in all their Habitations, and where is the proper Region of Light, Life and Solace for ever, and nothing at all is wanting to make their Joy full!

O my Soul, what's thy Thought of this? Canst thou be at rest till thou have Security for a happy everlasting State? O who can be at Ease, if he thinks on an eternal Doom in Hell! O great and merciful God, I cry unto thee for Deliverance from the Wrath to come, and for a Right and Fitness for eternal Blessedness. O this is what I must have! I must have Pardon, I must have Righteousness, I must have Deliverance from Hell, and a Title and Meetness for Heaven. I must have all this, or I perish for ever. I cry unto thee, O Lord, I weep, I groan, I sigh at thy Feet, I'll subscribe a Blank, fill it up as thou plearest, only let me have my Soul for a Prey: Let me not, I pray thee, be eternally and irrecoverably lost: Let me be saved of the Lord with an everlasting Salvation!

In Heaven they see God, and are made like him. In Heaven they have no Need of the Sun, Moon or Stars, for the Lord is unto them an everlasting Light, and the Days of their Mourning are ended. In Heaven they are come to Mount Zion, unto the City of the living God, and to an innumerable Company of Angels, to the General Assembly and Church of the First-born, and to the
Spirits

Spirits of just Men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament. In Heaven they are ever with the Lord, enter his Joy, and have an eternal Life, without Fear of dying in that happy Place, where *their Walls are Salvation, and their Gates Praise.* But Hell is the opposite Place to all blessed Seats; the dismal Region where nothing that's pure, nothing that's pleasant or joyful can ever light upon them: There is no Saviour there to bleed afresh in their Stead, or to pity their Woes, or plead for their Relief, and no heavenly Spirit to quicken their dead Souls, and raise them from the second Death; and so their State is irrecoverably miserable.

And now, O that I might live! partake of Grace, and live to God, and live with him for ever, the vital Breath of whose Spirit is the spiritual and eternal Life of Souls. O Father of Spirits, and Father of Mercies! O Lover and Saviour of Souls! O Spirit of Light, Life and Joy for ever! I cry to thee One in Three, and Three in One, for Life, for eternal Life to my immortal Soul. I can be at no Rest without it, nor will I give the Lord any Rest till he *command the Blessing, even Life for evermore.* And O let not the Lord be angry, if extreme Necessity, with some Encouragements from Promises of Grace, put me forward in the Earnestness of my Spirit to plead for Life and Salvation to a dead, lost Soul. Heavenly Father, the Necessity of this is even infinite; for *who can dwell for ever with devouring Fire, who can abide in everlasting Burning?* And is it not thy Glory, O Lord, to be the Refuge and Sanctuary of all distressed Creatures who fly unto thee, as not seeing how they can be safe any other Way? And doth not the Lord repent himself for his Servants, *when he sees their Strength is gone, and there is none shut up or left (a)?* And now, O Lord, if Sin, if Misery, if Necessity felt and groaned under have ever had any Thing of Argument to move thee to pity and help one, I do not want them.

I am

(a) Deut. xxxii. 36.

I am here under a Necessity, says the Soul, of being as one whom the Lord cannot get rid of till I obtain his Grace and receive Life freely at his Hands. I beg Leave in all Humility, O Lord, to urge this Matter at the Foot-stool of thy Throne, as with deep Prostration and Self-abasement, so also with earnest and incessant Importunity. O let not the Lord be angry, if I mind thee of the gracious Words that have proceeded from thy Lips, even the absolute Promises thou hast made of a free and full Pardon of Sin, of a new Heart and a new Spirit, of an Inscription of the Law of God on the Heart (a), of making People willing in the Day of thy Power (b). I'll mind also the Throne of Grace erected on the Blood of Immanuel, where no poor contrite returning Sinner ever yet died. I'll also mind some Considerations of eternal Reason flowing from the Nature and Attributes of God; as, how Mercy would appear to be infinite Mercy indeed in saving the like of me, and how that the Power of God would be seen to be infinite, as it is, in pardoning such great Transgressions, and subduing such mighty Sins as mine. And let the Power of my Lord be great according as thou hast said; the Lord is long-suffering, and of great Mercy, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression and Sin (c). I'll represent also at thy Throne, that it would not be a Thing unworthy of thy Wisdom to step in for my Relief, when all other Refuge faileth. I'll search even into the Archives of Heaven, and the Records of Eternity, since, by a read Extract from the Book of Life, these who are written there are chosen out of the same Lump of Sin and Misery that others are left in. I'll mind the Lord also of the former Precedents of his Grace, since these are set down as Patterns and Encouragements for these who shall afterwards believe (d). And I'll cry unto the Lord, Lord save me as thou hast saved Thousands e're now by thy Grace, thy altogether free Grace: For I have all in me, that ever Grace found in any when it prevented them, and that is only Sinfulness, Unworthiness, Wretched-

(a) Ezek. xix. 20. Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. (b) Gal. cx. 3. (c) E. od. x. vi. 6. (d) 1 Tim. i. 16.

Wretchedness, and Misery. And Lord, I earnestly pray thou may not overlook me, or pass by me in the free Distributions of thy Grace, and Effusions of thy Spirit. My Spirit is overwhelmed within me, O Lord, and my Heart within me is desolate, hear my Prayer O Lord, and give Ear unto my Supplications; enter not into Judgment with me, for in thy Sight no Flesh living can be justified. I stretch forth my Hands unto thee; my Soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty Land, Selah. Hear me speedily, my Spirit faileth, hide not thy Face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the Pit: Cause me to hear thy Loving-kindness in the Morning; for I lift my Soul to thee. Out of the Depths have I cried unto thee O Lord. Lord, hear my Voice; let thine Ears be attentive to the Voice of my Supplications. If thou Lord shouldest mark Iniquities: O Lord, who shall stand? But there is Forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared (a).

XVI. Life and Salvation through Christ being a Matter of the utmost Importance, the Soul becomes further inquisitive, and would yet have more Satisfaction in what so infinitely concerns it.

But, says the Soul, how can this Thing be? How may such a Design be compassed? How can God, in Consistence with his Justice and Holiness, give Life and Salvation to guilty and polluted Rebels? Can there be Life, while Justice, like Cherubims and a flaming Sword, turns every where to keep the Way of the Tree of Life? Can there be Life, while the Curse of God preys upon, and tears out the Vitals of the Soul? What Life, while Sin's Pollution estrangeth and cutteth off from God, the Fountain of Life? If our Iniquities be upon us, and we pine away in our Sins, how can we then live (b)? Sure, no Life to the Soul, unless there be such a propitiatory Sacrifice, the Blood of which can at once quench the Flames of Justice, cancel the Curse of the Law, and wash away the Stain of Sin. And where can such a Sacrifice be found in Heaven or in Earth, among Angels,

(a) Psal. cxliii. 2. Psal. cxxx. 1, 2, 3, 4. (b) Ezek. xxviii. 10

Or among Men? *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come to him with Burnt-offerings, with Calves of an Year old? Will the Lord be pleased with Thousands of Rams, or Ten thousand Rivers of Oil? Shall I give my First-born for my Transgression, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul (a)?* Tho' I did, says the sensible Soul, I could not wash off the Stain of the least Sin: Much less atone Justice and appease Wrath for the innumerable Evils that compass me about.

Well, thou hast nothing to offer, O my Soul; yet God has provided himself a Lamb. Come, turn aside then, and see this great Sight: Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the Sins of the World (b). Come and see him, whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness in the Remission of Sins (c). Arise then, O timorous and pen- sive Soul, and be not scarred off by the Weight and Number of thy Sins, for he calleth and commandeth thee to behold him. He saith, Behold me; and if once will not satisfy, he saith again, Behold me, even to a Nation not called by his Name (d). 'Tis not Presump- tion then to lift up your Eyes and look on him: But 'tis Rebellion to shut the Eyes, and pull away the Shoulder.

Hark, O my Soul! and listen well to the good News the great Lover of Souls tells us, when he says, *I am come that they might have Life, and have it more abundantly (e).* O my Soul, may not thou now see that the great Design and gracious Errand, upon which the blessed Jesus came down to the lower World, was to give Life unto Souls? See now the kind and gracious Intention of the Son; and as little needs thou question the merciful good Will of the Father; since this was the End of Christ's Mission, and this Commandment he received of his Father, who so loved the World, that he sent his only begotten Son into it, that whosoever believes in him might not perish, but have everlasting Life (f).

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Hence

(a) Mic. vi. 6, 7. (b) John i. 29. (c) Rom. iii. 25, 26. (d) Isa. lxv. 1. (e) John x. 10. (f) John iii. 16.

Hence, he that hath the Son hath Life (a), which shall be as a Well of Water springing higher and higher, till it run into Life eternal (b).

XVII. Tho' such a Consideration as this cannot but in some Measure satisfy, yet the Soul is sadly exercised with Discouragements from the natural Enmity of the Heart to God.

True, saith the Soul, this shews indeed a God-like Goodness, and manifests the Redeemer to be True God, and eternal Life; Love and Life being his very Essence (c). And all this may well suit, and fully satisfy sensible, compliant, and well-temper'd Souls, who see their Need, and earnestly desire to receive the Atonement: But what is this to me, who have neither Wisdom to see, Strength to get, nor a Heart to seek Reconciliation with God? What blackens my Guilt to the outermost is my Neglect and Contempt of the great Salvation. For whereas the smallest Dawnings of Gospel-Light should have been to my Soul, as Life from the Dead, Oh how little is my Heart affected to God and the blessed Redeemer! Can such a Wretch as I, so impure and so ungrateful, ever expect that the Lord should cast so much as an Eye upon me, unless with such a Look as would stare me out of Being, or into Hell.

But why so pensive, O exercised Soul! Why fittest thou so solitary in the Dust? Why art thou so sadly distracted with Thoughts, and distressed with Fears? How grateful and reviving may it be to find, that all our Weakness and Perverseness, our Wickedness and Wretchedness were all foreseen, and considered by him, when he laid down his Life a Sacrifice for our Sins, and a Ransom for our Souls? For when we were without Strength, and when we were ungodly, in due Time Christ died for us (d). And what Good can the Lord find in vile Dust, but what he has given? Or what can he foresee, but what he designed to bestow on us?

(a) 1 John v. 12. (b) John ix. 34. (c) 1 John iv. 10. (d) Rom. v. 6.

us? Or is it possible we can be in a worse Condition, than what he foresaw, when he laid down his Life? For whom did the Blessed Saviour die? It was not for well affected Friends, or darling Favourites, but for Sinners, for Enemies, for the Strengthless and Ungodly. And when he did take Pity on us, and said unto us, Live, *It was not for any Comeliness he saw upon us; but when he saw us wallowing in our Blood, in a loathsome and lost Condition, he said unto us, Live (a).*

Say not then, O my Soul, thou art past Hope, but awake from Security and Unbelief, and flee for Refuge to lay hold upon the Hope set before us (b).

XVIII. The heavy Burden of Sin, and the weighty Importance of everlasting Salvation, make the Soul still very anxious for a sufficient Saviour.

But O Eternity, says the Soul, is an amazing Thing; and eternal Concerns are of an awful Importance! It cannot be an easy Thing so much as to be in Suspense, whether I shall be eternally in Joy, or eternally in Torment: And to trust for eternal Life, and eternal Happiness, requires a very sure and strong Foundation. Who is he that cometh to save me? Who is sufficient for such a great and weighty Undertaking? Is he of such Dignity, as can satisfy that Justice which is infinite? Is he of such Power, as can bear and appease that Wrath which exceeds its Fear? Is he of such Vertue, as can cleanse a Soul as black as Hell, or ease me of that Guilt that's heavier than Rocks? I am sure, I need such a strong Redeemer: And I am sure, I need not turn for Help in this, either to Saints or Angels: For what Creature can ease of that, which makes the whole Creation groan?

But, O solicitous Soul, may it not comfort thee, that when the Lord saw there was no Man, and took Notice there was no Intercessor (c), he laid Help on one that was mighty to bear it (d), being the Man that was

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God's

(a) Ezek. xvi. 4, 5, 6. (b) Heb. vi. 18. (c) Isa. lix. 16. (d) Psal. lxxix. 19.

God's own Fellow (a). Why dost thou not turn into this strong Hold, as a Prisoner of Hope (b)? Why dost thou not flee to him, who is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him (c)? Thy Redeemer is strong, the Lord of Hosts is his Name (d). Is he strong enough to save from Sin and Death, and Hell, and all the gloomy Powers of Darkness? O yes: For he hath born our Sins in his Body on the Tree (e), and nailed them to the Cross; and by Death hath destroyed Death and Hell, and him that had the Power thereof, that is the Devil (f), and hath spoiled Principalities and Powers, triumphing over them in the Cross (g): And now has ascended unto Heaven, having led Captivity captive (h).

XIX. The awakened Soul seeking further Satisfaction as to Christ's Willingness to save.

I doubt nothing of the Sufficiency of Christ, the Saviour, saith the anxious Soul. I know he hath Power that could draw me to himself, though all the Gates of Hell, and all the Powers of Darkness were between: I know if he will, he can make me clean; my only Doubt is of his Willingness. The Consciousness of the Greatness and Number of my Sins, staves me off from him: What Acceptation can I expect, who have so much offended God, and affronted my Redeemer?

But why, O pensive Soul, wilt thou doubt of his Willingness? In whose Heart came the first Thought of saving Sinners? Sure it came not into the Heart of Men or Angels to desire it, or dream of it. Was it not a Design conceived when thou wert hid in the barren Womb of nothing? Was it not then his own Self-motion? And what was it but his own Good-will unto the Children of Men, and his Willingness to save them, that was the secret Spring, running under Ground from all Eternity, which did burst forth in Time in all the Issues of Goodness, to the transporting Admiration of Angels

(a) Zech. viii. 7. (b) Zech. ix. 12. (c) Heb. vii. 25 (d) Jer. l. 34. (e) 1. Pet. ii. 24. (f) Heb. ii. 14. (g) Col. ii. 15. (h) Eph. iv. 8. Phil. i. viii. 18.

Angels and Men? Was it not hence that he gave his own Son, and founded an eternal Covenant of Love and Peace in him? What could draw a Saviour from Heaven to Earth, and from the Earth to the Cross? What could persuade him to *disrob* himself of *Light*, as of a Garment, and to cloud the Lustre of his *Divinity* by the Interposition of a pale, mortal Body? What but free *Love* and *Willingness* to save, could move him to all this? And from what other Principle would he woo thee to receive Mercy, beseech thee to be happy, and intreat thee to be saved?

And what Doubt can remain of this, when he, the *Amen*, the *Faithful* and the *True*, gives full Assurance, that *him that cometh unto him, he will in nowise cast out* (a)? If he were not willing, why would he command us to come unto him? Is it not the *Father's Commandment*, that we should believe on the Name of his Son *Jesus Christ* (b)? And is it not his own Commandment? *Only believe*, says he (c). And how serious and authoritative is he in his Commands: *I said behold me*; and again, *Behold me, even to those that are not called by his Name* (d). Can thou question after this his *Willingness* to give Salvation, when it is not only offered thee by Way of *Grace* and *Kindness*, but also charged on thee by Way of *Authority* and *Command*? And why would he condescend to the lowest Terms imaginable, if he were not willing to save thee? What doth the Lord require of thee, *O my Soul*, in order to be saved? No Merits, no Rivers of Oil, nor Mountains of Prey, no Price, no Pennance; but only come and receive the offered *Gift* of Life and Salvation (f). And is it a hard Matter for thee to receive a free *Gift*, and especially the great and unspeakable *Gift* of Christ, and eternal Life in him. Why dost thou behave as if thou wert grudging either the *Goodness* of God, in giving thee an Offer of eternal Life, or the *Dignity* of the Soul, in being made capable to receive it? Who can doubt of his *Willingness*, who condescends

to

(a) John vi. 37. (b) 1 John iii. 23. (c) Mark v. 36. (d) Isa. lvi. 1. (f) John i. 12.

to Terms so low, as that it becomes impossible there should be lower Terms of obtaining any Gift, much less eternal Life and Happiness in Christ.

XX. *The exercised Soul wanting Satisfaction as to present Acceptance, because it has long stood out against Gospel-calls.*

I have no Reason to doubt, *saith the sensible Sinner*, either of Christ's *Ability* or *Willingness* to save me: But alas! I have had already many an Opportunity of Salvation, many a bright Day of the Gospel, many an Offer of a Saviour, and many a loud Call from his Voice; and I have slighted all. I should have given him an hearing Ear, and obedient Heart; and all the Return I made was but a deaf Ear, and a rebellious Spirit. How shall I escape, who have neglected so great a Salvation?

Yet say not, *burdened Soul*, if this be thy Exercise, that thou art past *Hope*. Are not the Stout-hearted and Rebellious invited? *Hearken unto me*, saith he, *ye stout-hearted* (a); and these that have play'd the Harlot with many Lovers invited? *Thou hast play'd the Harlot with many Lovers*, yet return unto me, saith the Lord (b). And are not Backsliders also invited to come unto him? *Return ye backsliding Children* (c). Be of good Cheer then, O contrite Soul, rise, he yet calls thee. Hark, how he knocks, and takes not with the first Repulse, but waiting to be gracious, stands redoubling his Knocks; Behold, saith he, *I stand at the Door, and knock; if any Man will hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come in, and sup with him, and he with me* (d). And when thou hast repulsed many Offers of Grace, is not Mercy still importunate with thee? How many Years has free Grace stood at thy Door? Free Grace follows thee, and pursues thee, and looks, O contrite Soul, as if it would not let thee go, till thou hast a Blessing.

XXI. *The*

(a) Isa. xlv. 1. (b) Jer. iii. 1. (c) Jer. iii. 22. (d) Rev. iii. 20.

XXI. The jealous Soul questioning its Acceptance with Christ, till it be in a better Frame.

I believe, and am perswaded, *if I be the Man*, that all that come to Christ, whatsoever they have been, and whatsoever they have done, shall be accepted of him: But I want the Preparations and Qualifications required in those that would come and apply the blessed Saviour. Were I holy, were I spiritually, were there so much as a Spark of Grace in my Soul, this would encourage me to apply Christ, and receive his Benefits: But instead of this I am but a Lump of Corruption, and a Mass of Sin. Nor have I ever been sufficiently humbled, and broken in Heart for the same. O the Evils that reign in my Heart! O how hateful is my Condition! Dare such a one as I am lay Claim to such a high and transcendent Favour as Christ and his Benefits? or arrogate his Willingness to receive me? But why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why disquieted within me? Is Sorrow required; thinkest thou, for itself, as if God delighted in Sorrow as such? Could I cast down my Soul as low as the Pit, as low as Hell, this could be no Satisfaction to God for the least Sin. Sorrow and Contrition are subservient to a Closure with Christ the Redeemer: And when they answer this End, they are sufficient. And how can I be holy and spiritual, till first I come to Christ, my Sanctification as well as Redemption? Can I expect Fruit from a barren Branch, before it be ingrafted? Or would I buy Christ's Righteousness with the Price of mine; or seek his Righteousness only to seek mine own? What can I find in my self but sin, till I come to the Saviour? What Plea can I have but Emptiness, and what Price but Self-denial, according to the free Proclamation of his Grace, *Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters; and he that hath no Money, come ye, buy and eat; yea come, buy Wine and Milk, without Money and without Price (a)? And let him that is a-thirst, come; and who so-*

(a) Isa. lv. 1.

whosoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely (a). And now, O thoughtful soul, what canst thou crave more for thy Satisfaction? 'Tis certain indeed, that none can be willing, but such as are truly convinced of the horrible Evil of Sin, the absolute Need of a Saviour, and of his Ability and Willingness to save; but whoever are truly willing are welcome. Can the Terms of Salvation be more easy? Can the Articles of the Covenant be more free? Or can Christ and his Grace be set at a lower Rate? How absolutely impossible is this, either from the Nature of God, or the Nature of the Thing. *XXII. If now a Light from Heaven bring these Truths near to the Soul, it becomes in some Measure satisfied, as to the Grounds and Warrants of believing.*

O! What could the Lord do more, says the Man, to testify his Regard to Souls, his Willingness to save them, and the Encouragement they have to come unto him? Are there not loud Calls, moving Entreaties, and earnest Invitations made to every One? The Simple, he's invited to come and eat Bread in the Kingdom of God (b): The weary heavy-laden Sinner, he's invited to come to Christ for Rest to his Soul (c). And whosoever will is invited to come and take of the Waters of Life freely (d). When then do I not come? What's to hinder me to come humbly, and come boldly, and apply Christ the Reddemer, to all the Ends and Purposes, the Case and Necessities of my Soul require? Doth not he complain, *Ye will not come to me that ye may have Life (e)*? And doth he not weep, because, when he would have gathered a People, as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, they would not (f)? And what can he mean by all this, but the greatest Pity and Compassion to Souls? Hath not the Son of the living God given himself freely for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity (g)? And what Doubt can there be of

(a) Rev. xxii. 17. (b) Prov. ix. 4, 5. (c) Matth. xi. 28. (d) Rev. xxii. 17. (e) John v. 40. (f) Luke xi. 41. (g) Tit. ii. 14

his Willingness? Or what Doubt should any poor Soul make of coming to him? What's freer than a Gift, a Gift that prevented not only Mens Merits, but their very Thoughts? And doth God hold forth his Son, a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood (a)? And may not any bruised Reed find a Ground and Bottom of Peace and Satisfaction? Is not this sufficient to underprop the most heavy-laden, sinking and unsubstanting Soul? Renounce then, O contrite Spirit, all slavish Fear and Enmity of Heart. Come see the great Lover of Souls standing and waiting at the Door of thy Heart, till his Locks be dewed with the Drops of the Night. Come, feel him pressing upon thy Soul, by a Variety of Methods. He argues with the Soul, *Why do ye spend your Money for that which is not Bread, and your Silver for that which will not profit (b)?* He expostulates with the Soul, *Why will ye die, O House of Israel (c)?* What Fruit have ye in these Things, whereof ye are now ashamed (d)? He solemnly protests his Loathsomeness and Unwillingness, that any poor Soul should perish, *As I live, saith the Lord, I have no Delight in the Death of Sinners, but rather that they should turn and live (e).* And what greater Security can the broken-hearted Sinner have, than for Being itself to pawn his Being, and Life itself to pawn his Life in Pledge, that he delights not in our Ruin? O when the blessed Lord doth command, urge, threaten, allure, beseech, and turn himself into all Forms of Persuasion, that Sinners may turn and live, come to Christ, and find Life to their Souls; what Room is left for distrusting his Mercy? And who can doubt of Acceptance with him, who hath accepted a Paul, a Manasseh, a Mary Magdalene; and hath accepted Prodigals, Publicans, Harlots, and Backsliders, when they sincerely turned to him?

But though these Considerations in themselves be very satisfying; yet O the many Conflicts and Tossings of Mind, and its many contrary Resolves! Sometimes the Soul thinks 'tis easy, and at another Time that 'tis a hard

(a) Rom. iii. 25. (b) Isa. lv. 2. (c) Ezek. xviii 31, 32.
(d) Rom. vi. 21. (e) Ezek. xx. iii. 11. (f) Jer. xiv. 23. (g)

hard Matter to believe. Yea, what is the Heart of Man by Nature, but as a deep Pit of Darkness, Fear, and Horror, presenting all the gloomy Views which Unbelief, both speculative and practical, can cast up in ignorant, depraved and guilty Souls. Hence, notwithstanding all these Grounds of Faith,

XXIII. *The exercised Soul is complaining that he cannot believe, as he fain would.*

O, says the Soul, all this is comforting enough to the Man that believes; but alas! I cannot believe. Could I trust the Word of God, and rest in his Promises; could I rely on the Satisfaction, and apply the Merits of Christ the Redeemer, all would be well enough with me, and I needed no further Ground of Satisfaction: But I find it a difficult Thing to believe, that an eternal Life shall be bestowed on such a vile Worm as I am; or that such vile Dust should be advanced to such high Glory.

Yet, why, O thoughtful Soul, wilt thou not believe? Is it because thou fearest that such a great Being as the self-sufficient God, will not deign to take Notice of such a mean and silly Thing as thou art? But who then brought thee out of the Womb of nothing? Who made thee a Man, and not a senseless Thing? And who is it that daily keeps in thy Breath, and hitherto hath preserved thee? And on whom dost thou not depend for thine All? Is it not on God thou dependest for every Breath thou drawest, and for every Motion of thy Pulses, and for every Hair of the Threed of thy Life? Is it not in him we live, move, and have our Beings (a)? Why then wilt thou imagine, that because he is high, he will not take Notice of the Children of Men; or that he will forsake the Works of his own Hands (b)?

Or is thy Difficulty in believing, because thou canst not see in Reason, how such a poor, frail, dying Creature as Man, should look for so vast a Benefit as eternal Life? But for what End, O doubtful Soul, canst thou

(a) Rom. viii. 3. (b) I Cor. xiii. 12. (c) Ps. cxxxviii. 2. (d) Rom. vi. 11. (e) Acts xvii. 23.

then imagine Man was made at all? Were there no Prospect of a future State, 'tis certain there could be no Religion towards God; and Reason would be but tormenting and hurtful to Man. What then could thou suppose to be the End of Man's Make? Is he made only for a Life of Covetousness, that is, that he should live in a continual Scramble and Hurry, rise early and sit up late; and when all is done, either lament his Losses, or else his unsatisfying Enjoyments, till Death comes, and ends the Story? Considering the Vanity and Vexation that inseparably attends every Hunter after this World, and how all his Satisfaction doth not requite the Half of his Pain and Sorrow, may it not be plausibly enough alledged, That the delirious Person at Athens, who fancied all Ships that came into the Haven were his, was in a happier Condition than the covetous Miser, since his Comfort was more, and his Care less; and they are equal in this, that all seems Delusion.

Or is Man made for a Life of Sensuality? But consider, O my Soul, (besides the unsatisfying and momentary Nature of these Things) what View canst thou suppose the wise Creator to have in this; if instead of Man's eating and drinking that he might live, and live to some valuable Purpose, he were made to live only, that he might eat and drink, and indulge himself in sensual Delights? And for what End then served the noble Powers of his Soul? Is it not evident then, that such an End were neither worthy of God, nor worthy of Man?

Or is Man made only for a Life of worldly Honour? But how vain is the Thought in imagining you should be made happy by these you judge your Inferiors, or made better by these you think not so good as your selves? And would not the Means here destroy their End? While if you pursue Honour, it flies from you; and if you fly from it, it will follow thee. The Proud then cannot attain it, and the Humble do not much affect it. How vain a Thing would Man be, if this were his End; an End so difficult to attain, and so little worth when attained?

O thoughtful Soul, be not then entangled and ensnared with the Ambiguity and Crossness of thine own Reasonings, since in fair Reason, if thou believest thou art made by a wise and good *Agent*, thou canst not but be firmly perswaded, that thou art made for greater Purposes than what can be in any earthly Enjoyment.

Or is thy Difficulty in believing, because through Sin thou hast forfeited all Right to Life and Happiness? Here indeed is the most perplexing Strait, and the most *confounding* Thought: And, *O my Soul*, mince not Matters here, offer not to justify thy self, nor to extenuate thy Faults, but freely and humbly acknowledge, that not only thou deserves no Life nor Happiness, but that thou deserves the contrary; that pure Wrath and unmixed Vengeance is all that thou deserves; and that the least Benefit, yea any Thing on this Side of Hell, is a Mercy to such a poor Sinner. But, *O contrite Soul*, where hadst thou been long e'er now, if this had been the Rule of Divine Procedure with thee? Hadst thou not long before this Time dropt into Hell irrecoverably?

In all Humility therefore represent unto the Lord, that 'tis not our Desert that is the Measure of his Government at the Throne of Grace, but 'tis the Glory of God, in Conjunction with the Happiness of Man, being 'tis a Throne of *Mercy*, yet founded on *Justice* and *Righteousness* (a); else for what End did the Son of the living God come down among us, and tabernacle in our Nature? And why did he veil the Splendor of his Godhead, and die in our Room? Was not his End in all this, that he might save us from Sin, and might have a *ransomed People* (b); and *that we might sit with him upon his Throne* (c).

Again thou sayst, thou canst not believe. But be-think thy self, *O exercised Soul*, better in this Business; for if thou dost not believe, how is it that thou still hangs on Christ? And why cannot all the World part you and him? Why wouldst thou rather live *eternally* with Christ in Glory, than chuse, if it were possible,

(a) Psal. lxxxix. 14. (b) Isa. liii. 11. (c) Rev. iii. 21.

an eternal Life on Earth, in the Confluence of all worldly Enjoyments? And wouldst rather quit all Things in the World, than quit a Claim to the *excellent* Jesus? And how couldst thou find so much Delight in the Word of God, and wouldst rather have a *Promise* without a *Possession*, than a *Possession* without a *Promise*? And why wouldst thou be content of any Affliction, in order to get rid of Sin, and be fully conform to the blessed Redeemer? Can such Dispositions be in a Soul where *Faith* is not? As soon imagine that Fruits shall grow where there is not a *Root*.

But is it so indeed, that thou canst not believe? Yet, O *exercised Soul*, tho' thou canst not compass a *Promise*, yet set a *Mark* upon it, and say, It shall have my weak Heart, and poor Endeavours, till God shall fulfil my Desires. I deserve not, *says the humble Soul*, to look up to Heaven, the Place of God's Throne, nor even to breathe in God's Air, nor tread on his Foot stool; yet being that free Promises are issued out to all poor Sinners, I'll keep an Eye on these Promises, which are so many Branchings out of God's Covenant; at least I'll salute them afar off (a). I'll be like *Benhadad's* Servants, watching the Words that hint Remission and Life (b): And like the Woman of *Canaan*, glad to pick up the very Crumbs (c).

I know that no Improvements of *Pharisaical* Righteousness, no religious Performances, no Conditions to be wrought out of my self, can effect Faith. I cannot spin it out from the Nerves of mine own Strength; yet I'll urge my Heart to close with the excellent Redeemer. And O that God would urge it to an intire Resignation to his *Promises* and *Precepts*! What! Is there before my Door, through Corruption and Sin, a horrible Gulf of eternal Darkness and Death? And have I nothing to do with my precious and immortal Soul, but to throw it in, when I know of a Saviour, who is both able to save, and earnestly desirous to save me? O! I may not *slubber* over this Business: I'll leave no Duty unessay'd, and no Means untried; I'll

press this Matter hard upon my Soul; and I cannot think of giving it over, till I am perswaded and enabled to believe.

Yet because there is no Power in us to fasten on a Promise, unless God draw by his perswasive and overpowering Grace; therefore, *says the Soul*, I'll fall down before the Throne of Grace, I'll bow my Knees unto the Lord, and I'll beg that he may make Way into my Spirit, and cause me, from an inward prevalent Principle, yield myself unto him. O heavenly Light come yet nearer to my Conscience, with more pointed and peremptory Demands, and nearer to my Mind by a more clear Display of *the unsearchable Riches of Christ*, and the Glory of free Grace shining in him; and by my Mind strike with a vital Efficacy upon my Heart, and put all the Powers of my Soul into a suitable Motion towards Christ the Redeemer! And when so,

XXIV. *The Soul flees unto Christ, and lays hold on him for the Remission of Sins.*

If I sit still under the Power and Guilt of all my Sins, I shall die; but if I put my self, *says the Soul*, in the Hands of Christ, *if he save me I shall live, if he save me not I shall but die.* But surely I shall not die, if I can truly cast my self on my Redemer: For besides the desperate Necessity I am in which may thrust me forward to a bold Undertaking, I find sure and sweet Promises, that all who come to him shall live. Hence I am resolute to cast my Soul upon him, and put all my everlasting Interests into his Hands. The Matter indeed is awful, weighty and important, and causes great Thoughts of Heart, and great Workings of Mind; but I see nothing for me but one Thing, and that is, *fleeing to the Redeemer's Grace.* The Sense of Sin doth seize indeed my Soul with Terror; *but hath not the Lord laid on him the Iniquity of us all* (a)? Terrors from the Almighty do astonish me; but had not my Blessed Saviour a deep Sense of the Wrath of God, when

(a) Isa. liii. 6.

when his Soul was amazed, astonished, and sorrowful even unto Death, and being in an Agony, he offered up Prayers and Supplications, and strong Cries and Tears, and was heard in that he feared (a)? Dogs of Hell, even rabid Devils compass me about with their horrid Temptations; but was not my Saviour tempted in like Manner, even to Infidelity, Idolatry and Distrust (b), tho' Satan could find nothing in him. And why should our Sins be laid on Christ, but that he might take them off us? Why should he suffer Impressions of Wrath, but to deliver us from the same? And why should he be tempted, but to succour and deliver us when tempted? And therefore I flee for Refuge to this Hope set before me; I'll fix my Heart on Christ, and rely on him as the Lord my Righteousness; with both Arms of Faith, I'll fold about my Redeemer, and not let him go till he blest me. What Profit, O Lord, would there be in my Blood, or if I should be let go down to the Pit, whence there is no Redemption for ever? 'Tis the Living, the Living that praise thee, for the Dead and Damned cannot sing forth thy Glory, as I desire to do this Day, and my Heart desires to do through all Eternity. And will not high sounding Praises of redeeming Grace be more grateful in the Ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, than the Howlings of a wretched and damned Ghost? I will then look to Christ for Salvation: I'll look to him and his rich Merit and Grace. I roll my Soul upon him, and look for Remission of Sin only at his Hands; And tho' he should slay me, I'll trust in him, and rest in this, that he will not forsake or destroy, but preserve the Work of his own Hands: For, O gracious Redeemer, 'tis not the Preservation of Sin's Work or Satan's Work that I am seeking at thy Hands; these I would have utterly and finally destroyed; but 'tis the Preservation of this Soul or this Spirit thou hast formed within me, and in particular, that it may be saved from Sin and its Guilt, that I wait for, and expect. I cannot think of lying under the Guilt of all my Sins, a Load enough to sink me

E 3.

(a) Mark xiv. 33. Math. xxvi. 38. Heb. v. 7. (b) Math. iv.

me into the lowest Hell; and therefore I make a spiritual Adventure in *casting my Burden on the Lord* (a), and in staying my Soul on the Blessed Redeemer, having no less Warrant than his Command, and no less Encouragement than his Promise. It shall not be the Sense of my Sinfulness and Unworthiness that shall keep me off from Christ; being sure, that if ever I get Help, it must come from Christ's Hand; for to whom can I go, O Lord, but to thee, thou hast the Words of eternal Life (b). Yea, what else have I to bring to Christ, but a Sense of mine own Unworthiness and Vileness (c), and a certain Persuasion of his Sufficiency and Readiness to save me according to the good Word that hath proceeded from his Mouth: And sure I am that the Strength of Israel cannot lie (d), and that Grace itself, and Faithfulness itself will not shrink back; therefore I'll never give over looking to thee, and hanging on thy Word, but I'll thrust my Soul upon thy Promises, and bear my self on thy Faithfulness. And I do no more, O gracious Redeemer, than what thou gives me Leave to do, when I believe in thee for Remission of my Sins (e); as here I do by thy Grace: And I trust thee, O merciful Father and compassionate Saviour, with all the great and eternal Interests of my precious and immortal Soul.

But tho' the first Thing that a broken-hearted Sinner finds Relief from is, Christ's priestly Office in the Remission of Sins and Deliverance from Hell; for the News of a Prophet that enlightens the Mind can give little Ease to a wounded Spirit, the Question still remaining, who shall save me from the Curse of the Law, and the Torments of Divine Vengeance: And the Report of a great and mighty King can yield but small Comfort to a Soul that is already thunder-struck with the Terrors of that Wrath which is infinitely powerful.

But though this be so, that the first Ease to a Sin-burdened Soul, and the first Healing Balm to a wounded Spirit is from the priestly Office of Christ, which ar-

(a) Psal. lv. 22. (b) John vi. 68. (c) Isa. lv. 1. (d) 1 Sam. xv. 29. (e) Rom. iii. 25, 26.

tones Justice, appeases Wrath, takes away Sin, and saves from Hell; yet

XXV. The gracious Soul rests not in an Application of Christ's priestly Office, but heartily and absolutely consents unto him as a Prophet and a King.

Did I say, that I would believe in the blessed Redeemer for the Remission of Sins? I'll stand to this. But he shall be also my Prince and my Lord. O I consent, says the Believer, fully to Christ. Why? Whatever Way I view him, whether as a Priest, or as a Prophet, or as a King, I see incomparable Excellencies and ravishing Beauties in him; and nothing at all unsuitable, or unlovely. I consent also sincerely and absolutely unto the amiable Jesus. There shall be no Conditions, no Limitations, and no secret Reserves in my Acceptation of him; whether in the Office of a Prophet, or a Priest, or a King: But I'll say, Teach me thy Way, for through Grace I resolve to walk in thy Truth (a). Speak Lord, for thy Servant heareth (b). That which I know not teach thou me; and enable me to practise that which I know. I would be as fain sanctified as pardoned; as fain delivered from the Power and Pollution, as from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin; and I would as fain apply Christ Jesus for Sanctification as for Salvation: Yea, I account that Sanctification is Salvation, Heaven and Happiness to my Soul: And for this End, O I readily and gladly consent to thee, my Saviour and my Prince, my Lord and my God, my Portion and my Happiness, my All (and my only One). Whom have I in the Heavens high, but Thee, O Lord, and in the Earth there is none my Soul desires, besides thee (c).

XXVI. The Soul enters into a Soliloquy with itself, in order to be more clear as to its clasp with Christ.

O my Soul, art thou pleased with Christ and his Benefits? Yes, I am well pleased with precious Christ, and the

(a) Psal. lxvi. 11. (b) 1 Sam. iii. 10. (c) Psal. lxiii. 25.

the precious Benefits of his Purchase. O my Soul, dost thou consent to a whole Christ? *Yes*, I consent to him as a Prince and a Saviour; I resent it deeply that other Lords should have had Dominion over me, and I would have Christ to save me, not only from Hell, but from the Power, Pollution and Dominion of Sin, which I reckon as a Hell in my Breast. O my Soul, dost thou consent unto Christ with all thy Heart? *Yes*, I yield to give the Key of my Heart to Christ, that he may dwell in it, and quicken and sanctify and rule it, and enrich it with his Grace. I love thee, O Lord, with all my Heart and Strength, and I'll be for thee and not for another: *For my beloved is mine and I am his (a)*. O my Soul, art thou willing then to part with all thy Sins, Lusts, Idols, and Vanities for Christ's Sake? *Yes*, I agree to this with my Heart; I renounce my Pride, my Worldliness, my Sensuality, and every corrupt Passion and Lust, and the Sin in special that so easily besets me; and I prefer a humble, holy, heavenly, mortified Life to all the Pleasures of Sin. Blessed Jesus, Prince of the Kings of the Earth, I am willing to part with my Sins and come to thee: *Yea*, I come to thee for this End, that I may get free of my Sins and be parted from them. O my Soul, dost thou renounce this World, and all its Pomp, Glory and Delights, when they come in Competition with Christ? *Yes*, I am most willing to do this, and find the highest Complacency of Spirit when I count all Things but Loss and Dung in Comparison of Christ, *who loved me, and gave himself for me (b)*. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, O Lord, and upon Earth there is none I desire besides thee (c)*. O my Soul, art thou willing to renounce Selfishness, and deny thy Self-Righteousness? *Yes*, I go out of myself that I may be found in Christ, *not having mine own Righteousness which is according to the Law, but the Righteousness which is of God by Faith (c)*. Were even Life and Salvation possible any other Way than by the Righteousness of Christ, I would chuse it this Way rather. I chuse above all

(a) Cant. ii. 16. (b) Gal. ii. 20. (c) Psal. lxxiii. 25. (c) Philip. iii. 9.

Things to be beholden eternally to Christ, and to have Life and Salvation as a free Donation from him, and as the Fruit of his immense Love. I like best to receive all Things that pertain either to a Life of Grace, or a Life of Glory, from the Hands of *Immanuel*. Dost thou then, O my Soul, give away thyself entirely to the Lord? O yes, I surrender myself, and all that I have, or can do, to him, and for his Service and Glory. And this through Grace I do *heartily*: My Heart is in the Transaction. O my Soul, *thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord (a)*. This, through Grace, I do *sincerely*, as in the Sight of God, without any Allowance of Sin in my Heart. This, through Grace, I do *absolutely*, having no Terms of mine own making to propose to the Lord, but to be glad of his Terms, and cheerfully to accept of them, as here, *I sell all Things to buy this Pearl of Price (b)*. And this, through Grace, I do *constantly*; as this is a Transaction that is without Reserve, so it shall be without Revocation for ever. Amen, so be it for ever. Amen.

XXVII. *The gracious Soul cannot be persuaded, but that this Method of obtaining Pardoning Mercy and Grace, and thereby true Peace and Comfort, is most reasonable Christianity.*

How else, O sinful Dust, canst thou have Hope of God's Favour without a Righteousness, and the Application of it by Faith? Is he a God that can take Pleasure in Wickedness, or can Evil dwell with him? (c)? Is he not of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity (d)? And is not Sin the abominable Thing he abhors (e)? Or can thou think, that thy Amendment, which at best is but partial, and which is attended with more Evil to condemn, than any Good that can be so much as tolerate, much less be approved, is sufficient to atone for, or absolve from these innumerable Offences committed against the most high God, who is just and jealous, and

(a) Psal. xvi. 2. (b) Math. xiii. 46. (c) Psal. v. 4. (d) Hab. i. 13. (e) Jer. xlv. 4.

who searcheth the Hearts, and trieth the Reins of the Children of Men? Or dost thou think that the blessed Jesus, *who came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it,* laid down his Life, that thou mightst have Right to Life by an imperfect Righteousness; or which is the same, be justified without a Righteousness? What would be thought of the *Holy Jesus*, that *righteous One*, if he had died to procure a Liberty to Sin, or an Indulgence in Sinning? Or died to procure Acceptance with God without a Righteousness? What would be thought of the *Holiness* of God, that *sacred and venerable Attribute*, which strikes the very Angels with awful Veneration and Fear, if it could be dispensed and remitted at Pleasure? And what would be thought of the *Truth* of God, and of his *Judgment*, which is always according to Truth, if he pronounced these to be righteous, that are not? And sure, without the Application of Christ's Righteousness, *there is none righteous, no not one.*

But now in the Justification of a Sinner, through the gifted and imputed Righteousness of Christ, who is God-man, all the Divine Attributes kythe in their Colours, and shine in their brightest Splendor, and more to the eternal Wonder and Rapture of Angels and Men, than any other Way. Here Mercy is magnified to the uttermost in the pardoning of the Sins of many for the Merit of one: And his Justice, in that he spared not a Son, because a Surety for Sinners: And his Wisdom, in finding out the Way of punishing the Sin, and pardoning the Sinner. O the Glory and Harmony of all the Divine Attributes in this gracious OEconomy! Mercy and Truth, Righteousness and Peace here kiss one another. O here is Love to the uttermost; Mercy in its highest Perfection; Justice, Wisdom and Power visibly to be seen in their brightest Splendor!

And that Faith, which is the most self-emptying and self-denying Grace, is made the noble Correspondent between my Sinfulness and Christ's Righteousness; my Emptiness and Christ's Fulness; my Weakness and Christ's Strength; my Deadness and Christ's Life: O can any Thing be better contrived? Is not this Method altogether

ther worthy of God? And doth it not give us the highest Sentiments of all his glorious Excellencies? And is it not altogether suitable to the Necessities of Man; while there is an Offer and Exhibition of such Things, which, as a miserable Sinner, I absolutely need; and as a rational Creature I cannot but desire to have; and in the Way they can only be applied, which is, by receiving what I want, and not pretending to give what I have not, or do what I cannot.

XXVIII. *The Believer reviewing the Wisdom and Goodness of God in the Way and Manner our great Salvation is offered, acquiesces in the same with high Complacency of Spirit.*

O what admirable Things do I see, will he say, in the Scheme of our Salvation, as laid down to us in the Gospel! How well and wisely is it contrived, that Faith in Christ for the Remission of Sin is made the great Principle, influencing every Grace! for without it no Grace or good Qualification could ever be in the Soul. Without Faith, the Fear of God would have made the Soul as a hideous Darkness full of Spectres and horrid Visions: Sorrow and Contrition of Soul for Sin would be but Gnawings of Conscience: Humility and Self-denial would be Heartlessness and Abjection of Mind: Resignation would be rather from Stiffness than yielding of the Will to God: And Love to God, or to Men, or to ourselves would be but from the Teeth; since without Belief of Pardon, the Man that dares think of his State, would be little pleased with his Friends, and less yet with himself, and least of all with God. O how excellently then is it ordered, that there is so much Stress laid in the Gospel on believing in Christ for Remission of Sin through his Name!

Again, what Mercy is there in it and Wisdom, that the Offers and Invitations of the Gospel are general and indefinite! so that every one that thirsteth, and every one that will, may come and receive of the Waters of Life

Life (a). Had there been any Exception of any Sinner that's willing, then the most enlightened Person that sees most of the Evil of Sin, and the most humble Soul that's readiest to conclude himself the greatest Sinner, would have stood most off from embracing the Call of the Gospel: And so the most needy and most desirous of Grace would have kept farthest from it. How well is it then contrived, that the most self-abased Soul may with Hope and Confidence draw near to Christ!

Again, what Mercy is there in it, that Christ refuses none who seek his Help, and rejects none that come to him! as he himself saith, *Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out (b).* Had there been but one Instance since the Creation of the World, of any one that came with a true and sincere Heart to Christ, and yet was rejected of him, what Diffidence and Distrust would this have caused in the Heart of every poor Sinner; even such as would have made him very heartless in any Address to Christ. How wonderful then is the Wisdom and Grace of our Redeemer in settling Matters so, as that a broken-hearted Sinner can be able to say with Confidence, that if the Lord reject me, who with all my Heart do here come to him, it would be the first Instance of his so rejecting a poor Soul, since Man was made upon the Earth.

What Mercy is there in it, and excellent Wisdom, that the weary heavy-laden Sinner is expressly, and by Name, invited to come unto Christ, who saith, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (c).* If there is a deep Gash in the Spirit of Man through Sense of Sin, and if the Spirit of Bondage and Work of Humiliation be more than ordinary in him, then the Language of his Soul is, Who can draw near to a holy God? And so he could not think of coming unto Christ, but rather would flee from him as a provoked Judge: And so the most broken and wounded in Spirit would be furthest from seeking after the Physician. How admirably then is it contriv'd, that the weary, the heavy-laden, the poor, the blind, the lame,

(a) Isa. lv. 1. Rev. xxii. 17. (b) John vi. 37. (c) Matth. xi. 28.

lame, the naked, the broken in Heart and wounded in Spirit have a special Intimation of Grace made to them, and are expressly invited to share of the same!

What Mercy is there in it, that there's no Sort of Sin but what we have an Instance of the Pardon of the same in the sacred Scriptures, except the Sin of obstinate refusing the Pardon! Had it been otherwise, considering that the Seeds and Principles of all Sins are lurking in every Man's Heart by Nature, which a serious Inspection into the holy Law of God, and a narrow Observation of the Heart in its secret Workings will soon discover: In that Case the very Best, and who have most Light to see most of the Evil of Sin, and the Plagues of their own Heart, would be most apt to make the most dreadful Conclusions against themselves, to the turning away their Hearts from Christ. O the rich Mercy and manifold Wisdom of God there is in this! that not only no Sinner is excluded from the Offers of Pardon upon Faith and Repentance; but also, there is no Kind of Sin, but what we have a Record of its actual Pardon: That no Man may be left without Hope, but all may seek unto Christ, and sue for his Mercy and Grace.

Again, what Mercy is there in it, saith the Believer, and what excellent Wisdom is manifested, that the Offers of Christ and his redeeming Grace are free, altogether free, without any Money and without any Price! *He that is athirst may come, and whoever will, may come, and he that hath no Money may come, and buy and eat; yea come, buy Wine and Milk without Money and without Price, being justified freely by his Grace through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus (a).* By Nature there dwelleth no Good in us, and what had we then to give unto God? We are vile, and what had we to recommend us to God? And we are impotent, and what could we do unto him? How impossible then were it, that ever we could be redeemed, if it had depended on any Thing we are, have, or can do. Besides, if all the Hope of Redemption had turned upon what One hath been, or what he now is in a natural State;

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State;

(a) Rev. xxii. 17. Isa. lv. 1. Rom. iii. 24.

State, then the most ignorant of the Holiness of God, and the Purity of his Law, and the least acquainted with the Evils of the Heart and Life, would trust most to Christ, and hope most from him: Which would be against the Reason and Nature of Things, as well as the Nature of God. And on the other Hand, the most enlightened, who by seeing the Evil of their Sins, do judge and condemn themselves for the same, and do most justify the Holiness and Justice of God, and give him the Glory of his Attributes, would be farthest from hoping in Christ's Grace, and so from valuing him. And so how impracticable would the Salvation of any of Mankind be in such a State of Things? O the Mercy and Wisdom of God, that the Offers of the Gospel are so laid, as that Grace is given to all that see they need it, and see themselves so well, as to own they do not deserve it, and are made to value it as more precious than Rubies, and all the Things that can be desired!

XXIX. *The Believer finding the sure Grounds he goes upon, in receiving Christ for Righteousness and Life, he is put into a strange Mule, what so much Grace and Goodness to him should mean.*

'Tis strange, says the Man, that the Lord should in the least notice me, a poor silly Worm, whose Habitation is in the Dust, and who am crushed before the Mole! 'Tis strange that I should meet with any Favour, who deserve to be cast into Darkness among raging Devils, gnawing Worms, and unquenchable Flames! Certainly any Thing on this Side of Hell is Mercy to me. 'Tis of the Lord's Mercy I am not consumed (a). The least Off-fallings of common Mercy are more than I deserve. But that the Prince of Life should lay down his Life for the ransoming of my Soul from Hell and Death, O! Wonderful!

And further, that I should have an Offer of this Life, and be earnestly called to receive the same; O! how taking and overcoming is this Thought!

That

(a) Lam. iii. 22.

That such an One as I should have the least Glimpse of Mercy, the least Hope of Reconciliation with God: I, such a loathsome Mischance by Nature: I, so vile a Worm, and whose Nature is a Sink of Sin, and a Hell of Horror: O astonishing Goodness!

But that the Lord of Heaven, who needed me not in my best Estate, should not only give me an Offer of Life and Salvation, but by Grace cause me also embrace the same: What shall I say of such immense and ineffable Goodness? *Is this the Manner of Man, O Lord? Thy Thoughts are not as our Thoughts, nor thy Ways as our Ways (a): O the Breadth, the Length, the Height and Depth of infinite Love!* What finite Capacity can dive into it? O boundless Goodness and essential Love! Endless Eternity, thou art not sufficient to express how great is this Goodness, Kindness and Love!

XXX. While the Believer's Heart thus museth, the Fire of Love burneth, and his Affections are kindled to the Blessed Redeemer.

I love the Lord, says the Believer, who, tho' infinitely possessed of all amiable Excellencies in himself, hath yet vouchsafed to set his Love on such as I am, so mean and so contemptible as a Creature, and so vile and so hateful as a Sinner. O! I love that excellent One for what he is, and what he hath, and what he hath done for poor lost Souls! O blessed Saviour, I am resolved never to have a hard Thought of thee after this: Who could do more to testify thy Love to us than thou hast done? I see through the Wounds in thy Side, the Love that flamed in thy Heart. O but Christ is precious, and shall ay be precious to my Soul! Let him frown; let him threaten; let him afflict; yet nevertheless I'll love him!

But what's my Love, but some poor Thoughts and languid Passions, that bear no Measure of Proportion to that infinite Loveliness there is in him; and that in-

finite

(a) Isa. lv. 8.

finite Love he beareth to me! O that I could love thee more, my dearest Redeemer, and serve thee better! Whom have I in the Heavens high, but thee, O Lord? I count all Things but Loss and Dung for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ (a). O God thou art my God; early will I seek thee; My Soul thirsteth, my Flesh longeth for thee (b). My Heart breaketh for the Longing it hath to thee, and thy Statutes continually (c).

XXXI. When such warm Affection glows in the Breast, it cannot be confined, but bursteth forth in Commendation of the blessed Jesus.

The Heart of a Believer by this Time comes to be very full of Christ; and being too narrow to contain such high and big Sentiments, as it entertains, of the lovely and loving Redeemer, it cannot confine itself, but saith, as the Lord liveth I will shew my self: I will utter my Love to the amiable Jesus.

But yet being utterly at a Loss to express the Sense of the Heart, it knows not well what to say, but compares him to this and that, and the other delightful Object; and perhaps to the first desirable Thing it sees; and infinitely prefers him to them all. His Countenance, says the devout Believer, is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars (d). I sat down under his Shadow, and his Fruit was sweet to my Taste (e). My Beloved is fairer than the Sons of Men (f): Yea fairer than the Sons of God. And this Man shall be my Peace (g). This God-Man is my only refreshing Shadow from all the scorching Beams of Divine Justice: And of him will I say, Here is my Rest, and here will I dwell, both safely and pleasantly. And although the Fig-tree should not blossom, although the Labour of the Olive should fail, and no Fruit be in the Vine; yet his Fruit shall ay be sweet to my Taste (h).

XXXII. The

(a) Philip. iii. 8. (b) Psal. lxxiii. 1. (c) Psal. cxix. 20. (d) Cant. v. 13. (e) Cant. ii. 3. (f) Psal. xlv. 3. (g) Mic. v. 5. (h) Hab. iii. 17.

XXXII. The Heart that's so full of Christ, cannot rest in generals, but comes to be very particular in the Description and Commendation of the excellence Jesus.

Can I hold, saith the Believer, with only a general View and Notion of my dear Redeemer? No, I cannot refrain; I must proceed to a more particular as well as delightful Contemplation of all the amiable Excellencies (if possible) of the Blessed Jesus, and their universal Suitableness to my Wants, and Saviouriness to my Spiritual Senses: For who but Christ unto me? Who so suited? Who so exactly fitted to precious Souls, as the excellent Jesus, the Prince of Life, the King of Glory, the Darling of Heaven, and the Delight of Angels and Men? Whatever Way I view thee, O lovely and loving Redeemer, there is enough to ravish the Hearts of all the Saints and Angels in Heaven!

And now will I sing a Song of my Beloved. "Thou art *Man*, indeed, O excellent Redeemer, but thou art also *God-Man*, and therefore the Man that is God's Fellow (a). Thou art *God*, and therefore thy Countenance is altogether Divine: And thou art *Man*, and hereby God is visibly to be seen, and familiarly to be enjoyed in thee. Thou art *God*, and therefore thou art an infinite Ocean of all Excellencies: And thou art *Man*, and therefore all Beauties whatsoever, created or uncreated, material or immaterial, are formally or eminently in thee. Thou art *God*, and therefore possessest of all Perfections: And thou art *Man*, and therefore these Perfections of thine are enjoyable by Man as his Necessities require, or his Capacity can admit. O Flower of all Perfection! No Wonder Saints and Angels are ravished with thy God-like Visage, Loveliness and Love!

"In thee, O eternal Son of God, are Light, Truth and Wisdom, as in their first Seat, and enough to charm

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(a) Zech. xii. 7,

" charm the Eyes of every Beholder for ever. Thou
 " art the Light of Life, the Light of Heaven, the Son
 " of the Morning, the Son of Glory: And whatsoever
 " is lightsome, or pure, or pleasant, or joyful in
 " Heaven or in Earth, is a Ray of the Light, Know-
 " ledge and Wisdom that are in thee as the Treasury
 " of them. And that Wisdom of God that is in thee,
 " shines with such an infinite Variety of Draughts,
 " Counsels and Contrivances, as attracts the Eyes of
 " all the Angels in Heaven (a). The very hidden Treas-
 " ures of the Divine Wisdom and Knowledge are
 " opened up in our IMMANUEL (b); and the fullest
 " View of the Mystery of God and of the Father,
 " and of Christ, is to be seen in him (c).
 " And what can be said either more or less of thy
 " Goodness and Love, but that tis God-like Goodness,
 " and God-like Love! Tis Goodness itself, and Love
 " itself: Goodness in a thousand Shapes, and Love
 " with a thousand Charms: O Goodness that is infi-
 " nitely so, and therefore can satiate the Soul with
 " Pleasures and Delights: A Goodness that is purely
 " so, and therefore can never glut in giving Satisfac-
 " tion. O amiable One, there are no Clouds in thy
 " Brows, no Frown on thy Face at all, but thy Coun-
 " tenance is fair as the Moon, and clear as the Sun;
 " and thou art all Smiles, Ravishments and Delights.
 " And O the Beauty of thy Holiness! Thou art the
 " HOLY THING by Way of Singularity and Eminency
 " (d). There is no Spot in thee at all (e). Thou art Light,
 " and in thee is no Darkness at all (f). This is the
 " Beauty of thy Face, and an Excellency that is so
 " amiable, so God-like, so ravishing, as that it strikes
 " all in Heaven into eternal Rapture, who with Tran-
 " sport and Extasy cry out, *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord*
 " *God Almighty* (g).
 " Nor art Thou to be less commended for thy Power.
 " And indeed, O excellent One, thou never appeared
 " more

(a) 1 Pet. i. 12. (b) Col. ii. 3. (c) Col. ii. 2. (d) Luke i. 35.
 (e) Cant. iv. 7. (f) 1 John i. 5. (g) Rev. iv. 8.

" more amiable than when thou came from Bozrah;
 " with thy Garments dyed in red Blood (a); having by
 " Death given Death and Hell their Deaths Wound;
 " and vanquished all their gloomy Powers. O it was
 " well done this of Thee! O it was heroically done!
 " And let the Crown for ever flourish on thy Head.
 " Consubstantial Son of God; Thou art fairer than
 " the Sons of Men (b); fairer than the Sons of God;
 " brighter than the most refined Seraphim.
 " Was it not Thou, O Lord, who, when poor Sin-
 " ners were lying in Darkness and the Shadows of
 " Death, amidst Confusion, Fear and Horror, that
 " made them see a great and marvellous Light! Was
 " it not Thou, when awakened and contrite Souls
 " found the Guilt of Sin bringing such a horrid Gloom
 " upon their Conscience, as made them grim like
 " Hell and Death; Was it not Thou, that not only
 " offered thy self a Sacrifice to expiate their Sin, re-
 " move their Guilt, and save them from Hell; but also
 " presented and applied this Sacrifice so close to their
 " Souls, as made a light Heart, a smiling Conscience;
 " and a serene Spirit in the Soul that was deeply dis-
 " tressed before? Was it not Thou, O Lord, who
 " when the poor Sinner saw himself wretchedly pol-
 " luted with the Filth and Stain of Sin; Was it not
 " Thou that bath washed him in thy Blood (c), and
 " made him glorious within with Raiment of Needle-
 " work, and Cloathing of wrought Gold, and so fit to
 " be seen among Angels and pure Spirits. O thou art
 " perfect Excellency, the Brightness of thy Father's
 " Glory, and the express Image of thy Father's Per-
 " son; And let thy Name be excellent in all the Earth;
 " and thy Glory exalted above the Heavens."
 " And as for Graces, the unmeasured Fountain and
 " Treasury of them is in Thee, O wonderful IMMA-
 " NUEL, to be poured out and disbursed according as
 " we want, need, and can desire. Yea, Thou art an
 " overflowing Fountain of all Fulness, not waiting
 " for our Merit, but preventing it, not waiting for
 " our

(a) Isa. lxiii. 1. (b) Psal. xlv. 2. (c) Rev. i. 5. and 7. (d)

"our good Capacity; but making it, not waiting for
 "our good Desires; but creating them; not giving be-
 "cause we are worthy, but to make us so. Blessed
 "Jesus, how full of Grace, Goodness, Sweetness and
 "Excellency art thou! Let any Comprehend, if they
 "can, the Riches, the Fulness, the Breaths, the Ef-
 "ficacy of thy Grace. Heavens? sound with thy
 "Praises! For

"Glorious Things are spoken of the Son of the living
 "God. It is He that revealed Peace on Earth and
 "Good will to the Children of Men. It is He that hath
 "purchased this Peace by Sufferings, Blood and Death.
 "Tis He that arose again, and Thousands of Death
 "could not hold down the Prince of Life. And 'tis
 "He now that rides upon the Heavens by his Name
 "JESUS; the Earth shook, the Heavens dropped at the
 "Presence of God, the God of Israel. The Chariots of
 "God, our IMMANUEL, are twenty Thousand, even
 "Thousands of Angels. The Lord God is among them,
 "as in Sinai in the holy Place. Ephraim hath ascended
 "on High, thou hast led Captivities captive, thou hast
 "received Gifts for Men (a). It is HE, who, by a Pull
 "of his omnipotent Grace, draws the most backward
 "and rebellious Sinner unto himself. O Hero, O most
 "mighty Captain of our Salvation, gird thy Sword
 "upon thy Thigh, and in Glory, Majesty and State,
 "ride prosperously (b); subduing Thousands and Ten
 "Thousands of Souls unto thee in the Day of thy Power."

"When the Hellish Antipathy of our Nature is over-
 "come, and the Heart is inclined to Thee, is it not
 "Thou thy self that hath done this? And in it thou
 "hast taken to thee thy great Power. When thou
 "turns a Clod of Earth into a heavenly Nature, and
 "raises the Soul that was wrapt in the Mud of Earth,
 "and sunk in Flesh, to a heavenly Elevation; Doth
 "not this shew thee to be wonderful in Counsel, and
 "excellent in working? When thou preserves the small
 "Spark of Grace in the Soul, notwithstanding of the
 "many Quench-coals from the Devil, the World, and

"the

(a) Psal. lxxviii. (b) Psal. xlv. vix. lxxviii (c) Psal. lxxviii (d)

(a)

“ the Flesh; O but the right Hand of our Lord doth
 “ valiantly, the right Hand of our Lord doth valiantly,
 “ Higgaiou, Selah! When thou, O Lord, bears up a
 “ poor feeble sinking Soul under a thousand Pressures
 “ from Guilt, the Fear of Wrath, and Extremity of
 “ Troubles, and Continuance under them, and still
 “ keeps it staying itself only on thy self; certainly 'tis
 “ the Power of God that effects this; 'tis the Work of
 “ our Lord this, and 'tis marvellous in our Eyes. Re-
 “ joice ye Heavens and Earth, and all Things therein,
 “ and let the Multitude of the Isles be glad, for the Lord
 “ God omnipotent reigneth.”

“ O Son of the living God, thou art matchless and
 “ marvellous in all thy Excellencies! Thou art the
 “ Form of God (a), and who then can be thine Equal?
 “ What Comparison can there be between finite and
 “ infinite? Angels and Archangels, hold your Tongue
 “ of all your Excellencies, in Comparison of him, and
 “ cover your Faces, as ashamed of your Deformity
 “ comparative to his glorious Beauty. Glorified Saints
 “ cast down your Crowns at his Feet, as holding your
 “ All of him. Ten thousand Worlds, own ye are as
 “ nothing, and less than nothing and Vanity before
 “ him. And Sinners, for black Shame, mention not
 “ your Lusts and Idols in the same Day with him.”

“ Perfect Excellency is in him! In the Person of our
 “ IMMANUEL, God is fully to be contemplate in all the
 “ Beauties of his Holiness, in all the Smiles of his
 “ Grace, in all the pleasing Aspects of his Love, and
 “ in all the Resplendency of his Glory. Pure Excel-
 “ lency is in thee! Thou, O Lord, art Thoulands of
 “ Beauties, Heaps of Excellencies, and Treasures of
 “ Loveliness and Love; thou art purely so. The An-
 “ gels have their Folly, and the Heavens their compa-
 “ rative Impurity in thy Sight, but Thou art Light it-
 “ self, Thou art Beauty itself, and Perfection itself.
 “ There is nothing in thee, but what is so. Thy Per-
 “ son, thy Gifts, thy Promises, thy Precepts, thy
 “ Crown, thy very Cross is the Perfection of Beauty!

“ When

(a) Philip. ii. 6.

(b) Luke. viii. 20 (c) 1 Cor. xiii. 12 (d)

"When seen lifted up on the Cross, thou art enough to
 "draw all Men unto thee (a). O 'tis enough to draw
 "Earth unto Heaven, and to subdue a whole World
 "to thy Grace and Government! What Hearts are
 "ours! What but Rocks and Stones, or worse, that
 "are not drawn more powerfully to thee with such
 "a Cord of thy Love, and are not ravished into an
 "eternal Transport with thy God-like Countenance!

"I would fain essay to commend Thee, O lovely
 "and loving Redeemer; but what can I say worthy
 "of Thee, or suitable to thy superexcellent Perfections?
 "I may say, Thou art *white and ruddy*, white in thy
 "Divine Nature, which is the Brightness of thy Fa-
 "ther's Person; and red in thy Humanity, which was
 "of the first Adam that was made of red Earth. White
 "in thine own immaculate Purity and Innocency, but
 "red in the Imputation of our Scarlet Crimson Sins:
 "White in thy Goodness and free Grace to humble
 "Sinners, but red and bloody to thy incorrigible En-
 "mies. I may say, Thou art the Chosen, the Chief,
 "the Standard-Bearer among Thousands and Myriads.
 "I may tell that thy Face is like the Face of the Son
 "of God; that thou hast a majestick Head, enriched
 "with Light, and crowned with Glory; that the
 "Words of thy Mouth pass in Sweetness Honey, dis-
 "tilling from the Honey-comb; that thy Voice is
 "enough to wrap the Creature into eternal Ravish-
 "ment; that one Drop of thy Myrrh is sufficient to
 "sweeten Thousands of Oceans, and one Glance of
 "thine Eyes to strike Heaven into endless Raptures.
 "But all these Images are too weak and faint to re-
 "present what thou art. And so all and the due-
 "most I can say of Thee, is to join with all thy
 "Church and People, in saying, *Thou art altogether*
 "*lovely* (b). And whatever Way I view Thee, my
 "dearest Redeemer, I cannot but find such incomparable
 "Sweetness, and such a Joy diffused into my Heart, as
 "transports my Soul into an incorrupt, unrivaled, rap-
 "turous Love. And I grudge that such a Heart should
 "have

(a) John xii. 32. (b) Cant. v. 6.

have a Being in mee, that has so little Love to the precious Redeemer, or so little to answer his immense and infinite Love to me. Hence,

XXXIII. The warm and devout Soul falls down and prostrates itself before the Lord in profound Humility, and the pleasing Adoration of free Grace.

Whence is this that the God of Heaven, the Lord of Life, should shew so much Love to such a vile Worm, as I am! O wonderfull that he should set his Love on nothing, on less, yea worse than nothing and Vanity! O who could have lookt for such a Thing as this! Oh! I'll humbly adore thee, saith the devout Soul! I'll ly at thy Feet! I acknowledge I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my Roof (a). I am a Dog, and a Crumb from the Master's Table is more than I deserve. Yea, tis Of the Lord's Mercy I am not consumed (b). What's thy Service, O Lord, and dead Dog, that thou shouldst shew him so much Kindness?

But that the Lord, the Possessor of Heaven and Earth, should be at so much Pains, and so great Cost to rescue me, such a sinful and ungrateful Wretch as I am, from Hell and Death; and raise me up to Heaven's Happiness. Oh this fills my Soul with Divine Astonishment! This dazzles my very Apprehension, confounds my Thoughts, and outreaches even my Wonder itself! O the unfearchable Depth of the Riches of the Wisdom, and of the Love of God, manifested in our Redeemer! Certainly the Violation of such Grace and of such Goodness, by Contempt and Ingratitude, is the most fearful Wickedness in the World. O I never appeared so vile in mine own Eyes, as now that I find, I have been insensible of, and have despised such immense Goodness, and such inexpressible Love! And alas! that I am so unaffected at present, and do so little adore free Grace, and rich Grace! O Sovereign Grace! O irresistible Grace! What canst thou not do? What Difficulties are there, either from Man's Ignorance and Perverse-

(a) Matth. viii. 8. (b) Lam. iii. 22.

Perverseness, or from Satan's strong Power and subtle Policy, which the Grace of God manifested in the Redeemer cannot surmount?

O Divine Grace, thou can take an Advantage from our Sinfulness and Miseries to bring the more Glory to God, and the greater Exaltation and Honour to Man. What Hearts are so hard, which thou canst not break? Or so dead, which thou canst not enliven? or so backward to God and Goodness, which thou canst not convert?

And has the Power and Glory of free Grace been manifested to me; to such vile Dust, and such an ungrateful Worm as I am, that deserved nothing but Hell and Destruction for ever? O I am left to wonder, and to stand amazed at the Height and Depth of Divine Love! And I would like to be drawn off from my self, and to be ravished eternally with gazing on Christ's transpiring Excellencies, and the fixed Contemplation of his Love and Grace! O the free and superabundant Grace of our Glorious Redeemer!

XXXIV. *The Soul that has tasted that the Lord is gracious, cannot rest in a State of Distance from him.*

Have I not often found, says the Man, to my very sad Experience, that no sooner was my Heart estranged from Christ by Vanity or Worldliness of Mind, by Pride, or any sinful Affection, but immediately there was a Deadness in my Soul; a Restraint upon its Activity, and a Damp upon its Joy? I did indeed so far impose upon my self, as to believe there were Pleasures that could satisfy without the Favour of God and the Light of his Countenance, and without a right State and Posture of Soul towards the Redeemer, and without the secret, solid Satisfaction, which results from a spiritual and heavenly Temper of Mind. But O how slight and superficial were the Delights I found, in Comparison of what I lost! They could never yield me any inward Content, nor afford me any settled Peace. There was still something wanting, and something absolutely needful to found an intimate, solid and satisfy-

ing Joy; without which my Laughter was but like the Crackling of Thorns under a Pot, or like the Sneering of Fools. And how often, and how sadly has this happened in my Life? What by entangling worldly Cares; what by inveigling worldly Pleasures; and what by the vitiated Appetite of mine own corrupt Heart; how often have I suffered my spiritual Delights to fade, and lost the Sense of God, and the Savour of heavenly Things upon my Spirit! O where am I, *saith the exercised Soul*, and where can I find my self in such a Condition? Do not I find my Soul all this Time not right placed, but off its Foundation and Centre? And do I not find it full of Indetermination, restless Instability, and endless Excursions? For when a Man turns his Back upon God and Christ and Heaven, what has he stable to fix upon? And what can he do but run from Creature to Creature with a Pursuit as vain and vexatious, as they themselves are full of Vanity and Vexation of Spirit? O there can be nothing but Darkness in my Soul, when at a Distance from the Fountain of Light: And there can be nothing but Deadness in my Spirit, when at a Distance from the Fountain of Life: And what Comfort can there be in my Heart, while the Comforter, *which should refresh my Soul*, is far from me (a)? Can I be at ease, while in such a dark, dead and sad Condition? Can I be at rest, when my Feet are almost gone, and my Steps well nigh slip (b)? Can I rest, when I have lost my Ground; and my Soul is turned from God its only Centre and Rest? O! no, no. O that it were otherwise with me! O! that it were with me as in Months past, as in the Days when God preserved me, when his Candle shined upon my Head, and when by his Light I walked through Darkness; when the Almighty was yet with me (c); and the Secret of God was upon my Tabernacle: When I put on Righteousness and it cloathed me, and my Judgment was as a Rob and Diadem (d).

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XXXV. The

(a) Lam. i. 16. (b) Psal. l. xiii. 2. (c) Job xxix. 2, 3. (d) Job xxi. 14.

XXXV. *The Believer, when sensible of his Distance and Estrangement from God, seeks to return unto him by Repentance and Weeping.*

O! says the Soul, lamenting after the Lord, was there ever another followed with so many Mercies, who hath been so unthankful? Or exercised with so many Crosses, who hath been so unhumble? Or hath any so often engaged unto God, who hath been so unsteadfast in his Covenant? Or hath any had so great Experience of the Grace and Mercy of God, who hath so little Savour and Relish of it? Or doth any that professes such a near Relation to God and Heaven, discover so little of a Spirit answerable to such a Dignity, or suitable to such a high Expectation? Oh! while I think on these Things, *My Soul is troubled within me; being these, and such like, Iniquities separate between God and my Soul*(a); breed a Distance and Strangeness between God and my Heart, and break up the sweet Interviews, and delightful Intercourse my Soul hath had with God manifested in our Emmanuel. What shall I do in this Case? I'll *lie in the Dust* and afflict my Soul for Sin: I'll *return unto my God again with Weeping and Supplication*: I'll *put away Iniquity far from my Tabernacle*(b), that I may yet *lift up my Face to him without Spot and without Fear*(c). And O! now I *abhor my self in Dust and Ashes*(d)! And wherein I have done Iniquity, through Grace I'll do so no more: What have I to do any more with Idols(e)? I'll keep myself from mine Iniquity(f). And O to be freed of all my Trespases!

XXXVI. *Yes because no Tears can wipe out the Stain and Guilt of Sin, the gracious Soul makes a new Application of Christ's Blood for renewed Pardon and Grace.*

Doth Sin, says the exercised Penitent, clog my Soul in its Flights unto God? Hath it bred a Strangeness and Shyness

(a) Isa. lix. 2. (b) Job xxii. 23. (c) Job xi. 15. (d) Job xlii. 6. (e) Hos. xiv. 8. (f) Psal. xviii. 23.

Shyness betwixt God and my Heart? Hath it hindred that spiritual Compos'dness, or Sabbath of Spirit I have had in God? Hath Sin polluted and debas'd my Soul, by coming in betwixt it and God; in whose Presence I might have such Light, such Life and such Comfort? O sinful Sin! *Sin is a Burden too heavy for me to bear* (a). O to be eas'd of this Burden, and cleans'd from this Pollution! Whom should I go to for this End? I'll go to him, whose Love can cover a Multitude of Sins, and *whose Blood can cleanse from Sins* (b). I'll take hold of him, *who is set forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins that are past* (c). I'll accept of him, who hath received a Commission from his Father, *to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim Liberty unto the Captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that are bound* (d). And O blessed is he *that cometh in the Name of the Lord to save us* (e). I lay hold on him, and apply his Blood for renewed Pardon and renewed Comfort.

XXXVII. *Where there is a true Application of Christ for Pardon and Grace, or a true Desire of Communion with God, the Man will set himself to live very humbly, tenderly and holily before the Lord.*

'Tis a Contradiction to think of getting the Pardon of Sin, without getting the Pollution of it cleans'd away, and the Power of it broken: There being an inseparable Connexion between Justification and Sanctification. Yea, the Power and Pollution of Sin is the greatest Punishment of Sin: It was so to Adam, and 'tis so to his Posterity. 'Tis the spiritual Death threaten'd, comprehensive of all other Evils: And 'tis so even from the Nature of the Thing. Were there no other Stroke of Vengeance upon a Sinner. *His own Wickedness would correct him, and his Backslidings reprove him.* And as 'tis a Thing utterly inconsistent in itself, so 'tis a

(a) Psal. xxxviii. 4. (b) 1 John i. 7. (c) Rom. iii. 25.
(d) Isa. lx. 1. (e) Psal. cxviii. 26.

horrible affronting of God to his Face; to hope for Pardon, and at the same Time maintain an Affection to Sin, and have no Mind to part with it. What is the Meaning of this, but a hoping that God will give Liberty to dishonour his Name, and trample on his Laws? And is this meet to be said unto God? O horrid, and impious Absurdity!

Well then, *says the exercised Soul*, if I sincerely aim at Pardon, Acceptance and Communion with God, I'll sincerely aim to be holy also; for God is holy, and *without Holiness no Man shall see the Face of God* (a). *What Communion can there be between Light and Darkness* (b); between a holy God and unholy Souls? *Is he a God that can take Pleasure in Wickedness, or can Evil dwell with him?* O! no, no. Sooner shall Heaven and Earth, yea Heaven and Hell blend together, than that God shall ever be a Lover of Sin.

And I must be *spiritual and heavenly*; for if Earth or any Thing on Earth be the *Main* of my Hope, and *Chief* of my Delight, how can I correspond to the Relation I profess to have unto God? Or how would he think it consistent with his Honour, to own an Earth-worm, as one of his People? I must then, through Divine Grace, discover a certain Excellency of Spirit by looking Heaven-ward, and looking Heaven-like; in respect of which *God may not be ashamed to be called my God*. And for this End, I'll hate my Sins forever, and *I'll walk before the Lord in the Land of the Living* (c). I'll walk tenderly, holily, purely and awfully, as one that is ay before the Lord, and never desires to be out of his Sight, while I live. Hence,

XXXVIII. *The gracious Soul becomes very solicitous and watchful against all Temptations to sin.*

O, *says the Man*, I must be very intent and careful in the great Matters between God and my Soul: I must not wait till Sin appear in its vilest Hue, but I will strive

(a) Heb. xii. 14. (b) 2 Cor. x. 14. (c) Psal. cxvi. 9.

strive against, and check the first Motions of Sin, and *abstain from every Appearance of Evil (a)*: And look also not only to the Bulk of my Duties, but also to the Manner of performing them. And O, I am resolved, through Grace, to stop my Heart, and put a Restraint upon it, whenever it begins to wander from God. I know I can neither get nor keep Communion with God, without keeping the Heart close and near to him, and without a narrow Watch over the loose and unsettled Thoughts that are ready to stray from God, and fall to the Creature again, and without exact and *circumspect walking (b)*: And I resolve upon all this! And O! might I attain to it! But,

XXXIX. *Because there is no trusting of the Heart, or any of its Resolves, the gracious Soul sees a daily Need of Christ, and of immediate Dependence on his Grace.*

I know, says the Believer, that 'tis not in me, or in Man to direct his Heart, or to stand to his own Resolves; but Christ he shall be the Guide of my Youth, and the Staff of mine old Age: And I'll go through this Wilderness leaning upon my Beloved (c); not in Pretence and Presumption, as some do, but by a real and faithful Dependency. And not only as a Branch on the Wall for Support, but as a Branch on the Root for Life and Sap (d); for without him I can do nothing: As without his Merit I can do nothing for Justification, so without his Spirit I can do nothing in Sanctification, Direction, or Consolation (e); The Life then I live shall be by Faith in the Son of God (f). Am I in Darkness, and see no Light? I'll trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay my self upon my God (g). Want I Liveliness of Frame? I'll go to him who came into the World that we might have Life, and have it more abundantly (h). Is there nothing but Fainting and Weakness in

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(a) 1 Thess. v. 22. (b) Eph. v. 15. (c) Cant. viii. 5, (d) John xv. 4. (e) John xv. 5. (f) Gal. ii. 20. (g) Isa. l. 10. (h) John x. 10.

my Soul? I'll lean on him *who giveth Power to him that fainteth, and who, to him that hath no Might, increaseth Strength* (a). Am I in an Hour of Temptation from Sin, or Satan, or the World? I know his *Grace is sufficient* (b), and I fly to the same. And in every Case I'll depend on my blessed Redeemer, and not think of moving one Step Heaven-wards without his Grace and Strength.

XL. *The gracious Soul being pressed by its own Necessities in the Sense of an absent God, riseth to a great Pitch of humble and earnest Importunity for his Presence.*

Rather, *saith the warm and devout Soul*, let me suffer any Want than the Want of Communion with God. Thy Presence, O Lord, can make up the Want of worldly Riches, Honours, &c. but all the Creation cannot fill the Room, or make up the Loss of God to a Soul. How vain and useless is my Life without an Interest in God, and Intercourse with him? Without this I can be in no State to serve him aright: For how vain a Thing will it be, to be tugging at the Oar of unassisted Duties? What Good can I either do or get in Ordinances, unless the Lord be with me in them? And without this I can be in no Condition to honour God. If the Lord shew himself, the smallest Graces will shew themselves excellently and well: But if God is gone from the Soul, the very Light of that Soul is put out; and there is nothing but a Chaos of Darknets, Impurity and Horror in it. Yea, *saith the sensible and earnest Soul*, without the Presence of God, and daily Influence from his Spirit, I cannot manage even the Stock of habitual Grace. The infused Habits of Grace are God's great Work; but they would remain Habits still, or rather decay, without constant Divine Communications. And have not I many a Temptation to overcome, many a Cross to bear, and many a Flood to pass?

(a) Isa. xl. 29. (b) 1 Cor. xii. 9.

pass? And how could I pass fairly through all these Difficulties, unless the Lord be with me?

Hence the Soul being pressed by its own Exigencies, and stirred up by Love, it cries mightily unto God for his Presence, saying, *O God thou art my God, early will I seek thee: My Soul thirsteth for thee, my Flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty Land where no Water is: To see thy Power and thy Glory, so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary (a)! O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even unto his Seat (b)! How gladly will I submit to all Conditions of Reconciliation and Restoration unto the Presence of God! Though the Lord should require much, and impose much, yet if he will come to me, and cause me to approach unto him, I am content with all, and glad of all: For the Desires of my Soul are towards thee, O Lord, and the Remembrance of thy Name (c). My Heart breaketh for the longing it hath towards thee (d). My Soul followeth hard after thee O Lord (e). O thou that dwellest among the Cherubims shine forth (f)!*

XLI. *It cannot be otherwise, but that the warm Believer shall be very pressing in this Business, since he finds that Communion with God, thro' Christ, is such a very real and satisfying Thing.*

That there is a real Communication from God upon the Soul; and a real Impression correspondent to that Communication, is evident from the spiritual Sense and Experience of a gracious Heart.

What is it, saith the Believer, but a Divine Light shining in my Heart, that can give me such a clear and extensive View of God, of Christ and Heaven, in Comparison of what I had before; whereby I have, not a Knowledge only of Terms, Propositions, and Arguments about heavenly Things, as Hypocrites may have, but a real Perception of the Things themselves; not a Knowledge by Report and Hearsay, like a blind Man's under-

(a) Psal. lxxiii. 1, 2. (b) Job xxiii. 3. (c) Isa. xlv. 8. (d) Psal. cxix. 20. (e) Psal. lxxiii. 8. (f) Psal. lxxx. 1.

understanding the Definition of Colours, but an experimental Savour of spiritual Blessings, and their agreeable Sweetness and Suitableness to my Soul.

And what but the *Divine Presence* can draw the Likeness and Lineaments of Christ on my Soul; give such a holy Impression, and leave such a Stamp of God upon my Heart, as suffers it not to forget him?

And what also but a *Divine Power* can give such Life and Spirit to the Soul, that was dead as a Stone before: So that the Heart which was harder than a Rock, and more stupid than Earth, becomes melted like Wax, and made not only alive, but very lively in holy Duties?

Again, what but a secret *Influence* and *Outletting* from God, can infuse such Joy into my Heart, when there is no visible Cause for it: *So that tho' the Fig-tree should not blossom, nor Fruit be in the Vine, and the Labour of the Olive should fail, and the Flocks be cut off from the Fold, and the Herds from the Stall; yet I can rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my Salvation (a).*

What's the Tendency and Issue of all these Divine Influences upon my Soul? Do they not make my Soul more holy, humble, spiritual and heavenly? and fashion it into a nearer Conformity unto God; and cause my Heart acquiesce in him, as my only *chief Good* and *supreme Happiness*? And can this be owing to any mechanical Operation of Nature? Can *Nature* rectify and amend Nature? Or rather, can Nature outdo Nature? Can Nature nor only elevate Nature above its natural Centre and Bias, but even change and wholly alter it, and give a spiritual Modification to all its Powers, Properties, Vertues and Actions? Can it turn a Lump of Flesh into a spiritual Nature? or a Clod of Earth into a heavenly Nature? Sooner shall the ponderous Mountains start from their Centre, and burst up from their Foundations, and, like Balls of Light, flee unto the higher Orbs and Regions of Light, than that any natural Cause shall be productive of such supernatural Effects.

Or is it mere Fancy that works such Wonders, and gives such a happy Turn unto the Souls of Men; when

(a) Hab. iii. 17, 18.

'tis not me alone, *saieth the Believer*, or when 'tis not one or two only, in one Age, or in one Corner of the World, but Hundreds and Thousands of Men and Women, of all Capacities, in all Ages, and in every Place where the Gospel is preached, that have the sure and sweet Experience of these Divine, these Soul-transforming, these God-conforming Operations on their Spirits? And perhaps even where the Gospel is not, or but corruptly preached, there may be some superficial Tastes of such supernatural Powers.

Can it be *Fancy*, when the Persons that are most grave and composed, most prudent and sagacious, most inquisitive and discerning, and who have taken most Leisure to know the true State of their Souls, and to observe what passes in their Mind, do not only attest to and avouch their Nearness to God, and the Divine Communications and Manifestations made to their Souls, but also venture their All in Time and Eternity upon it?

Yea what's the Life and Spirit, and main Design of all true Religion, but a holy and heavenly Intercourse of the Soul with God? Or a forming the Spirit suitably to the moral Perfections of God, in order to have Communion with him as our chief Happiness? Can I once imagine, that Religion consists only or *mainly* in social Virtues? If so, since these social Duties have Respect mainly to the Preservation and Comfort of the animal Life, there could be no higher View in such a Religion, than how one, by the most proper Methods, might serve the Flesh: For 'tis certain a Religion cannot be more excellent than the End for which it was instituted. And all this would be a Supposition so gross and horrid, as that it were impossible to aggravate it by grosser Absurdities than the Supposition itself.

XLII. *Yet often there is so much Darknes mixed with the Believer's Light, as that his Light is neither clear nor dark, hence he is often in sad Suspence whether he is a Child of Darknes, or a Child of Light.*

The least Thing in true Grace, let it be supposed ever so weak, is, that the spiritual Part is predominant, and gets

gets the better in the Conflict with Sin and Satan: At least habitually it must be so; and every particular Grace must have the Ascendent over its contrary. But this Superiority of the Spirit to the Flesh may be in such a low Degree as not to be easily perceived. The Person, it may be, finds much Darkness, Misperuasion and Hesitancy in his Mind as to spiritual Things, and yet he sees as much in them as makes him prefer them to a thousand Worlds. His Trust and Confidence in a Redeemer may be very low and weak; and yet he hath more Satisfaction from what he promises to himself from God Christ and Heaven, than from any or from all his best Friends or his best Enjoyments on Earth. He is often complaining of his Impatience and Unsubmissiveness to the Will of God; and yet he would not for a World want a God to rule it, and would rather that God should dispose of him and all his Concerns, than that he himself should have the carving out his own Fortune. He sadly complains of the Coldness of his Love to Christ; and yet offer him an eternal Confluence of all worldly Comforts on the one Hand, and the eternal Enjoyment of Jehovah and the Lamb on the other, he thinks there is no Comparison between them; and readily saith with the Psalmist, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, O Lord, and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee* (a). He bemoans that the Work of Mortification of Sin in him is not sufficient, when the Reason of it may be, that he cannot be satisfied with any Degree of Mortification but what extirpates Sin Root and Branch. He is sore molested with the Lusts both of his Flesh and of his Mind; but he is busy by Prayer and Fasting and Watching to get a full Victory, and is willing to submit to any Methods, how costly or how rough soever they may appear to Flesh and Blood, that God may take, for the purging away of his Sin. He is much troubled with the Risings and Workings of Pride; but he cannot be satisfied, nor have inward Quiet of Mind, but in so far as he is made humble and lowly in his Mind, and made to stoop and bow willingly to the Divine Sovereignty and

(a) Psal. lxxiii. 25.

and Will. Selfishness creeps in upon him; but he is never so well pleased, as when he can brook to be despised and go out of himself for the Glory of God. His Fancy perhaps is tickled and gratified with the Thoughts of worldly Prosperity and Honour; but this he soon finds to be but a slight Joy, and as the crackling of Thorns under a Pot, and therefore cannot have inward settled Contentment but in God and Conformity to him. The Earth is much in his Mind; but make him sure of Heaven, sure of reaching the perfect Communion with God there is in Heaven, he'll willingly leave this Earth at a Call. He wants, it may be, melting, passionate Joys in spiritual Things, while yet there may be such an inward Calm and sedate Admiration of the glorious Things of Christ's Purchase, as pierces into the very Centre of his Soul.

But then, on the other Hand, what real Reason hath he to be sadly distressed in his Spirit, in finding how weak and how wanting he is in Grace. How dark and dim, says he, is my Understanding in the Things of God, and how weak is my Persuasion of them? How else would I find it such a hard Thing to believe the Promises, unless I see some visible Way of Performance? And how could I suffer myself to be so entangled in worldly Cares, or so inveigled with worldly Pleasures, if my Assent to the great Things of the Gospel were such as it should be? How could all this happen, if there was not some great Defect in my Persuasion, either of the Reality, or of the Excellency, or of the Suitableness of Things unseen and eternal? While I think on this, my Soul is troubled. I want much of the Light of the Glory of the Lord shining on the Face of Immanuel to shine on my Tabernacle. And doth not the Weakness of my Trust and Confidence in Jesus Christ my Lord betray me many a Time into jealous Thoughts of God, after all the Promises on his Part, and some sweet Experiences on mine? Where is there that hearty and full Recumbency of Soul on the Lord my Righteousness, as may be a pleasant Rest and Settlement to my Heart, that is many a Time tossed to-and fro and afflicted

ted and not comforted. I am also full of sad Regret, says he, that my Love to the lovely and loving Redeemer is so far from that Degree and Measure as it ought to be. How could there be so often such a Strangeness on my Heart, and such Unlistiness in my Spirit with respect to spiritual Things; or such Weariness of Mind and Distraction of Thought in Duty, if there was not much Coldness in my Love? Or how could the World get so near my Heart, or why would I be so seldom in Divine Meditation? Why would I not every Day, and every Hour of the Day, be counting that all Things are but Lo's and Dung in Comparison of Christ, if there were not sad Decays and Intermissions of my Love to the blessed Redeemer?

Besides all this, indwelling Corruption being so urgent and importunate, that tho' resisted and subdued in a good Measure, yet, what by the Vanity of our Minds, or the Carnality of our Affections, or the Folly of our Imaginations, it returns, renews its Assaults and presses hard upon the Soul again; so that for as many Inclinations there are to Duties, there are as many Counter-tendencies to Sin; and as many Motions as there are from the Spirit of God in the Heart, there are as many contrary Injections from Sin. All this makes the Case of the Believer many a Time so perplexed, that he can hardly discern whether it be Night or Day in his Soul.

And what further intangles the Soul as to a clear taking up of its State, is the Deceitfulness of the Heart and its unsearchable Depths. 'Tis even hard to know its general Disposition, whether it be sincere or corrupt; but to know all its secret Turnings, Windings and Traverses is next to being impossible. O how hard is it to search into the Bottom of the Heart, and find out the secret Springs of its Motion! Besides, there is a corrupt Partiality in our Hearts to think that our Good is more than it is, and to think that our Evil is less than it is. All this puts even the true Believer many a Time into a Fear lest a Promise being left of his entering into Rest, he should seem to come short of it (a). Hence the gracious Soul

(a) Heb. iv. 1.

after he hath even been as upon the Mount with God, is brought down again many a Time to examine whether the very Foundations of Religion be well laid in his Soul.

XLIII. *The Believer, being sensible of the many lamentable Defects and Changes of his spiritual Condition, which cost him the Labour of returning by the very Steps he hath lost, becomes very importunate with God for his strengthening and establishing Grace.*

O, saith the exercised Soul, when I thought I was upon my Watch-tower, guarding my Thoughts and Affections, and even my very Senses, these Avenues of the Soul; yet how often has the deceitful Heart given me the Slip! O give my Spirit a more settled Bent to Heaven and heavenly Things. When I thought my Spirit was bending to my God, the Original of all Blessedness, yet how soon did it turn aside like a deceitful Bow! O for a more steady Direction of Heart upwards and Heavenwards!

Sometimes I thought I had now Strength, not only to walk, but to run in the Ways of God's Commandments (a), yet O how soon hath my Soul fainted! Lord help me. Lord give Power unto the Faint, and to him that hath no Might increase Strength (b).

When I imagined I was got up unto a sublime and heavenly Frame, and that my Mountain was strong, and it should never be moved (c); yet how soon were the Wings of my Soul clipped! and how soon was I as a Bird entangled in Snares, that either falls down, or is pulled down to Earth again! O let the Snares be broken, whilst I withal escape (d). Cause me mount up as on Eagles Wings, run and not be weary, and walk and not be faint (e).

I know 'tis not a Fit of Affection, nor a Pang of Devotion that will reach the Work; but 'tis a strong habitual

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bitual

(a) Isa. xl. 51. (b) Isa. xl. 29. (c) Psal. xxx. 6. (d) Psal. cxiv. 7. (e) Isa. xl. 31.

bitual Intendment towards God and Christ, and a vigorous, steady Use of all the Means that lead nearer and nearer unto him. *Unite my Heart, O Lord, to fear thy Name continually (a); and fix my wandering Mind. Lord strengthen me with Strength in my Soul (b); and keep it for ever upon the Imagination of the Thoughts of my Heart to serve thee (c).*

'Tis not moving of the Lips, nor bending of the Knee that can carry a Soul to Heaven; but 'tis a going from Strength to Strength: And how can such a feeble and short-winded Sinner travel daily such a deep Ascent without thy strengthening Grace! *O strengthen what remains in me, and which is ready to die (d), strengthen with all Might in the Inner-man (e).*

I am sensible that many will seek to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven which shall not be able (f) because they seek it but faintly, and put not on Strength in their Endeavours to attain it. O give such Strength and Might in the Inner-man, that the whole Bent of my Soul may be employed in following hard after thee, my God, and in striving to enter in at the strait Gate (g), and may be strong enough to carry me on in my Travel Heaven-ward, with such Liveliness and Vigour as breaks through all the Rubs and Intanglements in my Way, from Sin, Satan, or the World.

'Tis not a transient Light glancing on the Head, or making a Stir only in the lower sensitive Powers, that I am praying for; but for an Impression of Divine Things, so deep as pierces through my Mind into the very Centre of my Heart, and operates on all the Powers and Affections of my Soul with such strong Influence, as to keep them direct towards God Christ and Heaven. Grant me this, O Lord, I beseech thee. *I pray God may sanctify me wholly and throughout in Soul, Spirit and Body (h).*

'Tis not some good Wishes and Purposes, or some general Thoughts of the Goodness of God and the Love of

(a) Psal. lxxxvi. 11. (b) Psal. cxxxviii. 3. (c) 1 Chron. xxix. 18. (d) Rev. iii. 3. (e) Eph. iii. 16. (f) Luke xiii. 14. (g) Luke xiii. 24. (h) 1 Theff. v. 23.

of a Saviour that will either serve my Turn or answer my Mind. I would have a vital Savour of the Things of God diffused through my Heart, and diffusing itself through all my Thoughts, Affections, and Actions. I would have Heaven so interwoven in the very Frame and Constitution of my Soul, as that every Thing I do may have a Tincture of Holiness and an Air of Heaven upon it.

'Tis not a Taste only of the good Word of God, and a Flash of Joy upon it that shall satisfy me; but I would fain have an equal Respect to all God's Commandments, an universal Work of the Spirit upon the whole Man, Soul and Body, and a Supply made to every Joint: For there is not a Grace pertaining to the Christian Integrity but I would have, and in the Measure and Degree that is attainable. Lord Jesus, furnish me with Supplies of the Spirit from *thy unmeasurable Fulness* (a).

O blessed Lord, 'tis an easy Thing for thee to do so. Thou canst, with a secret Touch upon my Spirit, communicate Life, Strength and delightful Motion unto it in spiritual Things. Thou canst with thy uncontrollable Power incline my Heart, with the greatest Freedom and Willingness to follow thee wherever thou goes. Thou canst with the efficacious Sweetness of thy Grace make my Soul, *that ere ever it is aware, it shall be like the Chariots of Ammi-nadib* (b). And hast not thou said that thou wouldst do so? Hast not thou said and promised, that *thy People shall be made willing in the Day of thy Power* (c); that *thou wilt pour Water on him that is thirsty, and Floods upon dry Ground* (d); that *the Righteous shall flourish like the Palm-tree, that he shall grow like a Cedar of Lebanon, and shall bring forth Fruits in old Age, and be fat and flourishing in the House of God* (e); that thou wouldst be as the Dew to Israel, *that he may grow as the Lily, and cast forth his Roots as Lebanon* (f); that *thy Grace shall be sufficient for us* (g); that having all Sufficiency in all Things, we may abound

H 2

(a) Philip. i. 19. John iii. 34. (b) Cant. vi. 12. (c) Psal. cx. 3. (d) Isa. xlv. 3. (e) Psal. xcii. 13, 15. (f) Hos. xiv. 5. (g) 2 Cor. xii. 9.

to every good Work (a); That every Branch in Christ shall bring forth much Fruit (b). And now, Lord, be it unto thy Servant according to thy Word.

I am sensible, O Lord, that without an abiding Root and Principle of Grace, any Thing done in Religion is but occasional, accidental and easily intermitted. I would have a strong Impre's of thy Spirit upon my Heart, to implant such a strong and prevailing Habit of Grace, as may cause a more clear and extensive Sight of Things unseen and eternal, a more predominant Respect to thy Glory, a deeper Set of Humility and Self-denial, a more lively and fixed Sense of God, a more awful and reverential, as well as a sweet and loving Deference to the Majesty of Heaven, and may cast my Soul into a more penitent, lively, tender and heavenly Mould. Grant, I beseech thee, according to the Riches of thy Glory, to strengthen me with Might by thy Spirit in the Inner-man, that Christ may dwell in my Heart by Faith, and that being grounded and rooted in Love, I may be able to comprehend with all Saints what is the Breadth and Length and Depth and Height, and to know the Love of Christ that passeth Knowledge, and I may be filled with all the Fulness of God (c).

I am further sensible that no created Grace can preserve itself, nor act itself, nor increase itself, without new breathing and Influence upon it from the Spirit of Christ: That, without this, Faith would soon fail, Hope would perish, and Love would decay, and all the Habits and Principles of Grace would wither and die. I pray therefore, Lord quicken me in thy Way. (d). Awake O North-wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out (e). Awaken my Soul to the liveliest Thoughts of God and the devoutest Affections to him. O stir up my Soul and bend its utmost Vigour to serve thee, my God, with a lively Faith, ardent Love, flaming Zeal, and Heart-raising Hope. Blessed Redeemer, so present thyself to my Soul, and keep up in it such a Sense of thy Love, as

suffers

(a) 2 Cor. ix. 8. (b) John xv. 2. (c) Eph. iii. 16, 17, 19.
(d) Psal. cxix. 37. (e) Cant. iv. 16.

suffers me never to forget thee, but excites me to be
ay bringing forth some Point to thy Honour, and some
Instance of Willingness and Activity for thy Glory.

'Tis not being now and then in a good Mood, by a
hasty Start of the Affections, that can or shall satisfy me;
but I would be holy, humble, and heavenly in the ge-
neral Temper of my Heart and Tenor of my Life. I
would fain fill up my Time with Duties, bring Godli-
ness with me into every Business of Life, and be in ac-
tual Fitness for Communion with God, and keep up In-
tercourse with him in his Providences, as well as his
Ordinances. Grant, Lord, that Holiness may be a new
Nature in me, making me prompt and ready for holy
Things, and holy Things easy and familiar to me.
Grant these holy Dispositions and Acts may be so pow-
erful, as to bear down all Oppositions and Temptations
to the contrary. Grant they may be still getting Ground,
and be drawing the Soul nearer and nearer to God, its
Rest. And grant such holy Thoughts and Affections
may be the most sweet and delectable Exercises of my
Mind. For

I would fain that my Affections to Things Divine were
lively and not dull: Yet so, as not to measure the Strength
of my Grace by the Flash or Height of my Affections,
but the Affections themselves by the Bottom whereon
they stand, as Self-denial, cleaving to the Promise, In-
graftment in Christ, and Settlement of the Soul upon
the Mediator. I would fain have my Affections ready
and at Hand to the Things above, and not far a seeking,
or needing a great deal of Do to call and gather them
in to wait on my Lord. I would fain they were more
pure and unmixed, and had less of the Creature in
them. I would fain have them stayed in a Divine hea-
venly Frame, without turning back in the right Way,
or turning aside to the wrong. O that Holiness to the
Lord may be written in my Heart and Life, and that I
may be perfectly transformed into Christ's Image! O
that my Paths may be as the Morning Light that shineth
more and more unto a perfect Day (a). Strengthen, O

H 3

God,

(a) Prov. iv. 18.

God, what thou hast wrought for me (a); may thy Grace be sufficient for me (b): Make all Grace abound in me (c): May the God of all Grace, who is calling us to his eternal Glory by Christ Jesus make me perfect, stablish, strengthen and settle me (d). O for a Heart constantly fixed on God! One Thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after, that I may behold his Beauty (e), and fixedly contemplate the same. And O that his Glory and his infinitely amiable Countenance may be so displayed to me, as that I may count upon no Satisfaction, but what is to be had in God, and may never again turn off from him! And shall nothing of all this be attained in the Measure I would be at, till in Heaven I shall be made as a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and go no more out? Hence,

XLIV. *There is a longing and stretching of the Soul towards Heaven.*

• 'Tis no Wonder, next, that the Heaven-born Soul, which is so much delighted in God, and ravished with the Excellencies of the blessed Jesus, hath a very afflicting Sense of any Interruption of such rare and heavenly Enjoyments; and doth press hard for immediate Intuition, and unintermitting Fruition. Hence it rises higher and higher in its Desires and Pursuits, even as high as Heaven, the Seat of the Glory of the Lord, and the Place where his Beauty shines in its full Strength.

Is not, says the Believer, Heaven the Throne of God, where he shows forth all his Magnificence and Glory? And is not the King of Glory gone up to yonder Heavens? And what can satisfy me here on Earth? Not any Attainment of even Grace itself, can silt the boundless Appetites of my enlarged capacious Soul. O how small are the Glimmerings, and how dark are all the Discoveries I have of God and of Christ, while here away? Tho' they were never interrupted, they are but as Glass-representations; at least, but as Morning-dawnings in

Com-

(a) Psal. lxxviii. 28. (b) 2 Cor. xii. 9. (c) 2 Cor. ix. 8. (d) 1 Pet. v. 10. (e) Psal. xxvii. 4.

Comparison of Noon-day Visions. I see and feel indeed something that makes my Heart exult, and which yet I cannot express; but 'tis far from satisfying me, being both imperfect and inconstant: I would see the King in his Beauty: I would behold the full shine of his amiable, ravishing Excellencies. I would be altogether satiated with his uncreated Sweetness. O interposing Veil of Sense! How long will it be, e'er thou be drawn aside, that I may come into the immediate Presence of the infinitely glorious God, and behold my infinitely lovely Redeemer, bare-faced, without any Covert, and without any Veil! *Make haste, my Beloved, be thou as a young Roe, or a young Hart upon the Mountains of Bether.* O take me up to Heaven, that I may behold thy Glory; or if that may not yet be, let Heaven come down into my Soul. I beseech thee to shew me thy Glory. The beholding of thy Glory, as 'tis the ultimate Product of all thy great Designs, so 'tis the final Issue of all my Desires. And even Heaven itself would be as a Lamp without Light, did not the Glory of the Lord lighten it, and if the Lamb were not the Light thereof. O that I were beholding the Face of God in Righteousness, and were satiated with his Likeness!

XLV. When this comes to be the Temper and State of a Believers Soul, there is no persuading of him that such ardent Desires for Heaven and Glory can be vain Appetites.

What Reason can there be to fear that such earnest Desires shall not be granted? Can I once imagine, or can it ever enter into my Mind to suspect, that he, who by opening of his Hand, satisfies the Desire of every Living, will not draw aside the Curtain, and give Satisfaction to these Desires which are directed to himself, and restless till they reach him? Shall all the Creatures Desires to any suitable Good be accomplished, these only excepted that are terminate on himself, and directed to his Glory? Does he not implant as well as satisfy

tisfy the natural and rational Appetite of every Creature? Or is *Holiness*, i. e. the habitual Inclination and Conformity of the Heart to God, the only Disposition that is not of God's planting? Or is it the only Appetite which he will frustrate, and has made in vain? O horrid! O impious once to be imagined! Who is he that believes there is a God, that can believe this? Would the infinitely perfect *Author* of our Beings implant in Man vain Desires, or groundless Expectations? Is it congruous to the Divine *Goodness* to impose on us? Or to his *Truth* to disappoint us? Or is his infinite *Wisdom* under a Necessity of making use of Deception, to secure the Honour of his Government and Laws? Or shall Man, who is the Master-piece of this inferior Creation, be the only Creature that is cheated with an imaginary and delusive Happiness? Is it rational to suppose that God, who made Man the Chief of all his visible Works, should endow him with such Powers and Faculties, as served only to fill him either with vain Hopes and restless Desires, or else with amazing Fears and vexing Grievs: And so have his *Reason* only to be a Cheat, and his *Conscience* to be a Torment; as they would be, if there were no Views of Heaven's Glory? But especially shall it ever be admitted, that the holy Soul, after all its Efforts for Heaven's Happiness by fervent Desires, Prayers, Cries, Wrestlings; and the Righteousness that fits and forms the Soul for the same, that yet the Grave should terminate all their Desires, and extinguish all their Hopes? Would not such a Thought extinguish all Religion, and banish the Fear of God from the Earth? A Supposition so wickedly inconsistent, that if God be God, and Man be Man, 'tis impossible ever to be true.

Doubtless then he will satisfy the longing Soul, and fulfil the Desires of those that fear him. Let their Desires be never so sublime, and never so extensive; let them rise as high as Heaven, and stretch unto the utmost Bounds of the Universe, his all-comprehensive Goodness can fully satisfy them. Yea,

XLVI. *The Believer, when in a good Plight, finds a Heaven already begun in his Soul.*

What is Heaven but a clear View of the glorious Lustre of the Divine Perfections, and a full uptaking and eternal Admiration of Redeeming Grace? What is Heaven but a full Sense, and a full Enjoyment of Divine Love: Love shining there in its perfect Vigour and Strength? And what's the Heaven of Heavens, but an eternal drinking in of uncreated Sweetness, and an entering into the Joy of our Lord: Where all Springs of Tears are dried up, and where all Fountains of pure, unmixed and satisfying Joys are broken up for ever and ever, to the eternal Rapture of glorified Saints?

And now, *saith the gracious Soul*, when wrought up into a sublime and heavenly Temper, I have got a clearer Insight into the glorious and amiable Excellencies of God than ever before. I see him all Light, all Life, all Goodness, and all Happiness: And I see the Riches of most unsearchable Grace to poor Sinners, manifested in the Blessed Redeemer. And O but the Divine Glory is now rendred familiar, accessible, and enjoyable in our *Emmanuel*!

But that's not all, *saith the warm and believing Soul*, I see he hath loved *me*, and given himself for *me*. I see a most astonishing Product of infinite Goodness, even the Gift of Christ to *me*, to such a vile Worm as *me*! And 'tis not a simple Theory of his Love I have, but I feel a pleasant Gust and Relish of it. I both see and taste that God is good and gracious. And O my Soul stays upon, and tastes with Sweetness these blessed Divine Operations and Communications it has seen, felt and tasted in God manifested in the Flesh! And this Satisfaction reaches into the very Heart of my Soul, and affects it with a Joy unspeakable and full of Glory: A Joy of the same Sort with that in Heaven; being clear, pure and unmixed, and proportionable to the whole Compass of the Soul, its Nature, Necessities and Duration. And this is the Joy that enables me sometimes

times not only to glory in God, but also to glory in Tribulations, and to bring all the World under me.

And O! is not this a Heaven already begun? Is not this a Heaven upon Earth? Yes, certainly : And,

XLVII. The Heaven-breathing Soul is persuaded, that such a heavenly Disposition is a clear and certain Demonstration of the eternal Glory and Happiness that is reserved for Believers in Heaven.

Do I attain, *saith the Believer*, to a clear Contemplation of the glorious Excellencies of God? What Reason can there be to fear, that I *shall not behold his Face in Righteousness* for ever? For if this be the very End of Man's Creation, and an End worthy of infinite Wisdom, that Man should contemplate the Glory of God: Can any imagine why it should not be his End for ever? Who that knows any Thing of God, can ever believe, that the infinitely wise Author of our Beings can ever be light in his Judgment, or desultory in his Views and Ends? And were there Place for such a gloomy Thought, that all the pleasant Contemplations, which the Soul hath of the amiable Perfections and Beauties of God, should by Death be buried in eternal Darkness, what a horrid Damp would this cast upon the Soul? And how effectually would it stifle all Affection to him?

Again, Have I, *says the gracious Soul*, an Apprehension of Divine Love and Grace manifested in the Redeemer? But how could this kythe? Or how were it possible to have the least Apprehension of it, if in this Life Believers only had Hope? Could the Son of the Living God think it worth his while, to assume our Nature, and lay down his Life only to purchase an earthly Felicity? or rather only to make our Lives miserable: Since he calls us to *deny our selves, and to crucify the World*: And tells us, which also we find, that *in the World we shall have Tribulation*? Sure, were there not an After-happiness and an After-glory, it might be said that the best of Men lived in vain:

Yea

Yea that the Son of God died in vain: For if in this Life only Believers have Hope, then of all Men they are most miserable. And all this would be a Supposition so horrid and inconsistent, that nothing more absurd and impious could once be imagined.

Again, Have I also, says the Believer, a Manifestation of the Divine Love to me in particular; such as works Wonders in my Heart, purifies, refines and perfects my Soul; makes it rise above the World, and aspire to a Conformity to the pure and spiritual Nature of God? And shall the Dust of Death cover and bury all this? Is it consistent in itself, that the Soul of Man should be staked down to an earthly Happiness? and yet that he should enjoy purer Delights than what's to be had from Earth: And be perfected in his Nature by these very Things, which would (upon such an absurd Supposition) be contrary to his End: I mean the Denial of his earthly and sensual Satisfaction? And as this is a Thought inconsistent in itself, so how is it consonant to any of the Divine Perfections? To which of his Attributes can such Infidels turn themselves, that when all the Creatures have their Ends commensurate to their Capacities, Men the only rational Creatures in this lower World, and especially the best of Men, to make them the most miserable, should have Capacities which exceed their End, and which in this Case would serve only to torment them?

Further, Have I also a Sensation of pure and spiritual Joys, such as are homogeneal to the Nature of my Soul, and suitable to the most exalted and refined Reason? What Reason is there to suspect, that they shall not be eternal? To deny that there are such pure intellectual Joys, is to say that the Soul, which every one finds to be the Subject and Principle of Pleasure; yet that it has none of its own, or from its own natural Powers: And that all its Pleasures are owing to Matter.

And to imagine again, that these pure Soul-pleasures are less solid and satisfying than material and corporeal Delights, is as if one were saying, That the more a
Pleasure

Pleasure approaches to the Nature of God, who is a *Spirit*, that 'tis the more imperfect and less satisfying: A Saying, which would be infinitely injurious to the Living God.

Again, Since this is a Joy, which arises from an incorruptible Principle, *viz.* the Soul of Man, which being an indivisible Substance, cannot dissolve, but by Annihilation: And since the Object that feeds it is eternal, *viz.* the All-sufficient Eternal God, *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*: How can it be imagined it should ever have an End? Sure no Man that believes any Thing of God, will ever think, that the infinitely good One will be envious of our Happiness, in denying the Good we are capable of, and have also a fervent Desire unto?

Yea further, If these Joys were not eternal, 'tis certain they are but delusive Joys; And what is this? A Joy that resembles the Divine Felicity, and causes us resemble his Nature: A Joy that perfects the Soul: A Joy that inspires us with noble Principles; and puts us upon great and noble Designs: A Joy that raises us above sordid Cares and brutish Pleasures: A Joy that restrains from Vice, and excites to Virtue: Shall this Joy be only delusive, and founded on Mistakes? O horrid and impious Inconsistency! Which yet would be, if this Joy were not eternal. For, were there no true Hope of eternal Glory, there could be no true Joy in God: A sour and sullen Despondency of Mind there might be, or a slavish Subjection, like the forced Enthralment of surly Devils; but not a Spark of any true Love, or any true Delight in God could ever be found in that Soul.

Again, *saieth the heavenly Soul*, Do I attain even to a glorying and boasting in God? Sure this must be on a sure Ground, in Opposition to all Things that fail us in our greatest Need. And what Place were there for this glorying in God, unless he were *our God for ever and ever*? For what were our Lives worth, what were our Comforts worth; and what were we worth ourselves, if there were no Hope of future Glory? Were there no Prospect of eternal Happiness, our Lives were scarce

scarce worth the living, much less glorying in: For considering the Vanity and Vexation that accompanies every State, and the racking Cares, and vexatious Disappointments that attend every Lot, if to these should be added the Soul's expending itself in fruitless Pursuits after an eternal Happiness, which, according to such a vile Supposition, it could never reach, then we might freely say with Solomon, in a Case much the same, That an untimely Birth is better than he or she.

There being then such clear and undeniable Evidence from Scripture, and from what a gracious Soul hath already seen and felt of God, that there shall be an endless Happiness in Heaven: Therefore,

XLVIII. The Believer lifts up his Head, and raiseth his Neck, in the pleasing Admiration, and lively Expectation of the Glory to be revealed.

Is it only a passing Glance of God, or only a transient Taste of the heavenly Gift that I have in View, saith the Heaven-born and contemplative Soul? Sure no; 'tis neither all I desire, nor all I shall receive: Such a black Surmise shall never take Place in my Heart, that 'tis so much as possible, that the Lord would delight to tantalize his poor Creatures, and especially his Saints; as if he could find Pleasure in shewing them a Happiness, and bringing it to their Door, and then hide it from their Eyes, and keep it out of their Reach for ever. Is this meet to be thought of the infinitely good God? O let such a vile Suggestion be abhorred for ever!

More indeed cannot be had here but oblique Glances, refract and indirect Rays of the Glory of God: Not that God cannot reveal it, but that mortal Flesh cannot receive it; the Brightness of that Glory would strike our weak Sight blind: We could not see by Reason of so great a Light; 'tis Light inaccessible, unless tempered with Shadows, and would be to us as the thickest Darkness. But yet, saith the gracious Soul, tho' I have not seen, and therefore cannot fully describe the Glory of
I
Heaven,

Heaven, yet I know it to be very great, great inexpressibly, and that 'tis laid up for me. I have not yet attained to Heaven's Glory, but I have been taking a Look of it afar off in believing Contemplations; I have been walking about Zion, and telling the Towers thereof, and marking her Bulwarks. I was never yet within Heaven's Threshold, but I have got such a Foresight of its Glory, and such a Foretaste of its Joy, as wraps up my Soul in the rapturous Admiration of what I shall for ever possess; and it makes me cry out with Wonder and Amazement, O how great is thy Goodness which thou hast laid up for the Sons of Men (a)! The Earth is full of thy Goodness, O Lord. Many and rich are thy Blessings, and many are thy wonderful Works of Kindness unto the Children of Men! But what's the Goodness laid out, in Comparison of the Goodness laid up for them. The Glory possessed is great, but O 'tis nothing to the Glory in Reserve! O how great is this! O ye Angels and glorified Saints, put forth your Strength, and exert your Powers, in trying to conceive or express the Greatness of this Goodness: But as for me, saith the gracious Soul, 'tis altogether above my Reach. 'Tis a Glory as weighty as it is eternal (b); and I can do no more but with astonishing Admiration, cry, How great is thy Goodness? And how ravishing is thy Beauty (c)? For Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive, what God hath laid up for those that fear him (d). Behold Men and Angels, What Manner of Love is this, where-with the Father hath loved such Dust as we are, that we should be called the Children of God, and be allied to Angels, and Expectants of Glory! But it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but only in general we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is (e). Hence!

XLIX. The

(a) Psal. xxxi. 19. (b) 2 Cor. iv. 17. (c) Zech. ix. 17. (d) 1 Cor. ii. 9. (e) 1 John iii. 1, 2.

XLIX. *The Believer having such a great Prospect, and well-grounded Hope of Glory, he cannot express what Joy he now attains unto.*

What can be thought now, but that upon such a pleasing and ravishing View of Glory, the Heart of a Man should leap, and the Spirit within him dance for Joy? What Emotions, saith the gracious Soul, doth this raise in my Soul? What Pleasures doth it infuse into my Soul? What Exaltation of Mind? O intimate, enclosed, and safe Joys! Joys that reach the Heart, and penetrate into the Spirit of a Man! O pure Delights! There is no Baseness of the Action, no Reflection of Guilt, no Qualm of Conscience to confound these rational Joys. O generous and noble Pleasures! 'Tis well done, and wisely done, and worthy of a Soul, to place its highest Satisfaction in the Enjoyment of God, and to reach the utmost Happiness the Soul is capable of. O serene and severe, and at the same Time transporting Joys! I'll sit down before the Lord with a Divine Sort of Stupor, and wonder at his Grace. O sublime and transcendent Joys! Ye brutish Worldlings that are Strangers to all this, how much are ye to be pitied with your sordid Pleasures, and dunghill Satisfactions, which may appear amiable in the Varnish, but within are ugly and frightful as the Devils in Hell? But the Joy, says the exulting Believer, which is transfused into my Soul, is high and sublime; it enlarges, and, at the same Time, quiets my Appetite; or rather it quiets my Soul in the certain Expectation, that Desire, tho' long deferred, shall at length be accomplished, beyond what either Hope can expect, Desire crave, or Thought conceive. Lord, thou hast bestowed upon my Heart, saith the warm Soul, more Gladness than they when their Corn and Wine encreased (a). Thy Kingdom consists in Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost (b). O be glad in the Lord ye Righteous, and shout for Joy
all

(a) Psal. i. 7. (b) Rom. xiv. 17. (c) 1 Tim. i. 5.

all ye that are upright in Heart (a). Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice (b).

L. The gracious Soul becomes certainly persuaded, that these are not delusive and phanstatlick, but sincere and real Joys.

Some who have no Thought, and make no other Use of their Souls, but to serve them in eating and drinking; or to be as Salt to keep their Bodies from rotting, have not so much as a Notion of this spiritual and heavenly Joy. 'Tis to them as an armful of Shadows which they cannot grip.

Others, tho' through a common Light, they may have some confused general Notion of it; yet to their depraved Minds 'tis a gustless and insipid Thing, and to it appears to them but as a notional and not a real Joy. And others perhaps cannot imagine a real Joy, where there is not a present Fruition.

But is it the less real, *says the contemplative heavenly Soul*, because not in gross sensible Things; or because it is intellectual and spiritual? What then comes of the refined Pleasures which contemplative Minds find in the Search and Discovery of Truth? Or is the rational knowing Man the most cheated Person in the World, who yet would not exchange his Delights for all the World's Pelf, or the Flesh's Pleasure? Yea, what becomes of all the Joys of Heaven, where there is no eating nor drinking, no marrying nor giving in Marriage? And what would become of the Happiness of Angels, and glorified Saints? Or are Beasts and Animals of Pleasure, the only happy Things in the World?

Again, Is it not real, because there is not at present a full Enjoyment? Reason will remonstrate, Experience controul, and every Man's Sense will contradict this: For what would then become of the Worldling's Joy, when Heaven knows, and their own Hearts may know, that all their Joy is mainly in Hope and Expectation?

And

And what confounds *all*, their Hopes will in End prove vain, and their Endeavours fruitless.

But in heavenly Things, when our Thoughts and Desires rise to their utmost, our Expectations may rise beyond them; and our Enjoyments will at length go beyond even our Expectation and Hope (*a*); which Hope also partakes of the Thing hoped for. 'Tis not really a consummate Joy, because 'tis a real Joy; and the more that Hope participates of the Thing hoped for: For Grace enters upon, begins, and runs into Glory.

No Joy then can be compared unto it in Point of Reality; and all Joys that are not phantastick and imaginary, are included in it. 'Tis from a real Object, 'tis from God who only *Is*, who is *Being* itself (*b*), and the Rock of Ages. 'Tis from real Grounds, the All-sufficiency of God, and the Truth of his Promises. 'Tis from a real Cause, 'tis from real Grace, real Holiness. It has real Effects; it forms, purifies, and elevates the Soul. How could it cause a Man deny the Pleasures of the Flesh, and the Profits of the World, if it were not real? Or how could it support him in Wants, Sickness, Pain, Reproach? Or how could it comfort and revive him in a dying Hour, if it were not real? Do Men then use to be taken with Fancies, and Appearances only? Or how could it dispose the Heart to love God, and obey his Laws? Or be a Means of a most holy and excellent Life? Are these the Effects of Ignorance, Error, and Delusion? 'Tis impossible to believe this, and to believe there is a Diety, or to believe this and believe the natural and intrinsic Difference between Good and Evil, Light and Darkness, Truth and Falseness.

LI. *The Believer's Joys being so real, and the Foundation of them so sure, there is no persuading of him, that such sensible Emotions of Soul towards God and Christ, and Heaven, can be intemperate Heats, or Frantick Enthuliasm; but, on the contrary, he is deeply affected, that he is so little affected with spiritual Things, and is persuaded, that could he attain unto more of a spiritual and heavenly Temper, it would be true masculine Piety.*

How canst thou think otherwise, O my Soul, if thou either consider what God is in himself, or what he has manifested himself in Christ to such a poor Sinner as thou art? Canst thou express the high and grateful Apprehensions the Saints had of old, when venting themselves thus: *The Glory of thy Lord shall endure for ever (a).* Be thou exalted above the Heavens, O Lord, and let thy Glory be above all the Earth (b). Thy Name alone is excellent; thy Glory is above the Earth, and also the Heavens (c). Or hast thou Words to express that overflowing Admiration, and rapturous Strain of the Apostle in that extatical Prayer of his; *That he would grant you, according to the Riches of his Glory, to be strengthened with all Might by his Spirit in the inner Man: That Christ may dwell in your Hearts by Faith, that being rooted and grounded in Love, ye may be able to comprehend with all the Saints, what is the Breadth, and Length, and Depth, and Height, and to know the Love of Christ which passeth Knowledge (d).*

Or hast thou any Emotions of Heart that come near these. O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee; my Soul thirsteth for thee; my Flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty Land, where no Water is, to see thy Power and thy Glory, as I have seen thee in thy Sanctuary (e). My Soul followeth hard after thee, and thy right Hand doth uphold me (f). My Soul breaketh for the longing I have to thy Statutes at all Times (g). O
that

(a) Psal. civ. 31. (b) Psal. lvii. 11. (c) Psal. cxlviii. 13. (d) Eph. iii. 16, 17, 18, 19. (e) Psal. l.iii. 13. (f) Psal. lxxviii. 8. (g) Psal. cxix. 20.

that I had Wings like a Dove, that I might fly away, and be at Rest (a). Or is this an hypocritical Description of the Christian's Joy, when the Apostle calls it a Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory (b): And as if this were not sufficient, when he calls it a Peace that passeth all understanding (c).

Again, can there indeed be an Excess of Love to God, and the blessed Jesus, or too lavish Expressions of the same? This will happen (but not till then) whenever finite exceeds infinite; or whenever we can give in a Superplus of Return to his Love; or when Expressions can exceed the Thoughts that Believers have of Christ; or when their Thoughts of him exceed his infinite and inconceivable Excellencies.

And what less can the Almighty require of me, (or any Man) than to terminate the chief of our Desires upon him, and habitually prefer his Favour before Ten thousand Worlds? Can I think that the infinitely glorious God will so infinitely disparage himself, as that Clods of Earth, Lumps of Flesh, Trifles, Vanities, and sordid Delights, should be esteemed and desired more than himself, who only *Is* (d)? Yea, what has God of a Person, if he has not his chief Complacency and supreme Delight? Would I have the King of Heaven, the King of Glory, to come so much as in Comparison with Shadows, Vanities, Nothings, yea less than Nothings and Vanity; much less be horridly affronted by the bale Preference of them.

If the Happiness that a Believer expects, and in Part receives from God, be but a serimp, or even a finite Happiness, then perhaps the Subject might be exhausted, or there might be some Overdoing in the Business; but is it so in this Case? Canst thou by searching find out God (e)? Or canst thou find Words to express how great and how sweet are the Communications of his Favour, and the Consolations of his Love, when the Apostle tells, *he counted all Things not only as nothing,*

(a) Psal. lv. 6. (b) 1 Pet. i. 6. (c) Philip. iv. 7. (d) Isa. xlviii. 12. (e) Job xli. 17.

but even as *Loss*, in Comparison of the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ (a).

Can there then be any Fear of overloving God? Or any Need of moderating our Affections to him? O my Soul, how infinitely deficient art thou in thy Returns of Love? *What canst thou render unto the Lord for all his Benefits bestowed upon thee?* Nothing but some poor Thoughts and languid Passions, which bear not the least Proportion to these immense and innumerable Blessings thou has, and expects from him. Yea, suppose thy Love and Devotion to arise to a seraphick Flame, would thou not still be under an everlasting Impossibility of returning answerable Love to him, or expressing the Sense of his infinite Love to thee? What do the glorified Spirits mean by their casting down their Crowns before the Lamb, and him that sits on the Throne (b)? And what do the Seraphims mean, by their covering their Faces (c), before the resplendent Holiness of God, but that they hold their All of free Goodness, are under an eternal Impotence of ever making suitable Returns, and are of themselves nothing; and that they are infinitely and everlastingly in Debt to free and rich Grace?

And, *saith the Believer*, have I not Reason deeply to lament the many Sins and Imperfections that attend my best Frame, and best Services? How dull is my Heart, and how cold is my Love? If it were not so, how could there be such Weariness in Duties? How could the World have such a Share in my Affection? Why could not the All-sufficiency of God be enough to me, tho' bereaved of all worldly Comforts? O that it were otherwise with me! O to have a Heart wholly transformed into Love! And O that all my Tears and Groans, and Mirth and Musick, were turned into the melodious Songs of Love, Joy and Praise!

'Tis true, there may be a composed Admiration of God, and of Christ, and his Love, when there is but little Commotion amongst the sensitive Powers: But who can think that the most calm and dispassionate, if a gracious Soul, will not find his Heart and Soul joining with these

(a) Philip. iii. 8. (b) Rev. iv. 10. (c) Isa. vi. 2.

these Expressions; I will love thee, O Lord, my Strength. The Lord is my Rock, and my Fortrefs, and my Redeemer, my God, my Strength in whom I will trust, my Buckler, and the Horn of my Salvation, and my high Tower. I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised (a). Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: Thou art my God, and I will exalt thee (b). Thou art my God, and exceeding great Joy (c). Thy Statutes are better to me than Thousands of Silver and Gold (d); and sweeter than Honey from the Honey-comb (e). Thou hast brought me into thy Banqueting-house, and thy Banner over me was Love. Stay me with Flagons, comfort me with Apples; for I am sick of Love (f). Until the Day break, and the Shadows fly away: Make haste my Beloved, and be thou like a young Hart upon the Mountains of Bether (g).

'Tis true also, there may be a warm Fervour among the Passions, when there is not the least Motion of the Soul Heavenwards; as when either the Imagination is gratified with false Notions of spiritual Things, or if true Notions, yet they are Notions of them only as amiable Truths, but not as suitable, far less as up-making good Things. But the spiritual Sensations, and spiritual Emotions already described, as they are rational, so they ly deep in the Soul, and are formative of its State and Temper; they cast the Soul into a Divine Mould, and impress it with the Divine Image, and put all the Powers of the Soul into a spiritual Tune, and suitable Frame. Wherefore,

LII. The gracious Soul is no less pleased with the Precepts, than ravished with the Promises of God. A

Is there so much Joy in God and his Ways? Then, saith the Soul that feels it, I'll not count any Duty burdensome, nor the Exercise of any Grace hard, nor any Part of Christ's Yoke grievous: He commands me who hath loved me; and whose I am, and whom I love.

He

(a) Psal. xlviii. 1, 2. (b) Psal. cxviii. 28. (c) Psal. xlviii. 4. (d) Psal. cxix. 72. (e) Psal. ix. 10. (f) Cant. ii. 4, 5. (g) Cant. ii. 17.

He commands me, the Nature and End of whose Commandments is, *that my Joy should be full*; and also out of the Reach of Men and Devils; therefore let him command what he will, tho' the most self-denying, and Flesh-curbing Duties; I would fain, through his Grace, obey him: And let him impose what he will, whether Pain, or Sickness, or Poverty, Disgrace, or Loss of Friends, I would fain, through his Grace, submit to him. *None of his Commands are grievous to me (a)*, nor Self-denial; I delight to see myself to be nothing, and to be all and only in him. O how pleasant to be no more in a Conflict between two Ends, God and Self, but to find them both one, the best Self-interest being secured in the Favour of God.

Nor is the sour-like Grace of Repentance an unpleasant Exercise. I find a secret Satisfaction, when I am so kindly affected towards God, as to hate what he hates, and love what he loves. It does me Good at the Heart, to find my Soul melting in Sorrow, and dissolving in Tears, for the Offence I have done to such a great and such a good God.

Nor do I count humble Resignation to the Divine Will, an unpleasant State of Soul; but contrary ways, as 'tis a creaturely and kind Grace, so it brings much Ease to my Mind; where there is no more any disputing with God, who shall have his Will, but this Matter is settled, that God's Will shall stand, and I shall rest in it, as being as holy, just and good. And O! I never find my Heart right placed, or where it should be, but when conquering in thy Will, O rightful Lord and Redeemer!

And how delightful, *said the gracious Soul*, is universal Purity of Heart and Life? I never found Peace or Content in my Heart, while any one Sin was willingly harboured and entertained there. All the Darkness and Deadness, all the Trouble and Disorder that ever I found in my Soul, is from *sinful Sin*. *All the Ways of God are Ways of Pleasantness, and all his Paths, Paths of Peace (b)*. How great and inexpressible is my Satisfaction, when I find that I behave *dutifully* to God,

(a) 1 John v. 3. (b) Pro. iii. 17.

justly to Man, and decently to mine own Soul! O how easy is *Christ's Yoke*, and how light his Burden (a)! Which is easiest, to serve an infinite Number of sorrowful Idols (b), or to have the Matter settled beyond all further Dispute, that we shall serve the Lord, and his Voice will we obey? Which is pleasantest, to be toiling on in the Drudgery of Sin, when all the Wages that can be expected from such a Master, is only Hell and Death (c)? Or for a Soul, in the Exercise of *Holiness and Continuance in Well-doing*, to be seeking for Honour, Glory, Immortality and eternal Life (d)? Have not I, says the gracious Soul, a delightful Work of it, in Comparison of Satan's Slave, of Sin's Drudge? *Thy Law is very holy*, O Lord, therefore thy Servant loveth it (e). O that I were conform to thy Image; and that my Ways were directed to keep thy Statutes (f)! O that I could serve the Lord, and do his Will with more Strength and Vigour, Joy and Alacrity of Spirit! 'Tis good for me to draw near to God. Thy Statutes shall be my Counsellors and my Comforters, in the House of my Pilgrimage. And tho' the Flesh should count the Way to Heaven a high Ascent, yet if the Joy of the Lord be my Strength, I'll mount in Hope, as on Eagles Wings, I'll walk and not be faint, run and not be weary (g).

LIII. Now the Soul is much enlarged to run the Way of God's Commandments.

O now, saith the Believer, the Capacity of my Soul is so widened, and its Power is so enlarged, and its Affections are so raised and elevate, that from this Time and forward, through the Grace of God, through the Blood of Christ, through the Efficacy of the Promises, through the Virtue of Faith and the Power of Love, I'll go on in exercising every Grace, performing every Duty, and resisting every Sin. I'll be conscientious in having Respect to all God's Commandments, in seeking the Kingdom of Heaven, and its Righteousness, in the first

(a) *Math. xi. 28.* (b) *Psal. 115. 4.* (c) *Rom. vi. 7.* (d) *Rom. ii. 7.* (e) *Psal. cxix. 140.* (f) *Psal. cxix. 5.* (g) *Isa. xl. 31.*

first Place (a), in loving Mercy, doing justly, and walking humbly with my God (b), in denying all Ungodliness, and worldly Lusts, and living soberly, righteously and godly in a present evil World (c); and in following whatsoever Things are true, whatsoever Things are just, whatsoever Things are honest, whatsoever Things are virtuous and amiable (d); I'll give all Diligence to add to my Faith Vertue, to Vertue Knowledge, to Knowledge Temperance, to Temperance Patience, to Patience Godliness, to Godliness Brotherly-kindness, to Brotherly-kindness Charity (e). I'll count it my very Meat and Drink to do the Will of my heavenly Father (f): I'll serve him, not negligently; but with the best Bent of my Heart, and the utmost Extent of my Power, doing all that I can for the Purity and Power of Godliness in myself and others, and for the Glory of God and the Honour of Christ's Kingdom and Interest in the World. I'll run the whole Compass of Duty belonging to me as a Man and as a Christian, and look not only to the Matter of my Duties, but to the Quality of them. I'll aim, saith the enlarged Soul, at the very highest Strains of Grace, even that of being rich in Spirituals, and poor in Spirit; that of being lifted up with Joy, and yet low in Humility; that of having nothing, and yet as possessing all Things; that of trusting in a hiding or frowning God, and against Hope rejoicing in Hope; that of brooking willingly to be despised for Christ's Sake, and preferring inward Humility and Sincerity before all the Applauses of Men; and that of bearing Affronts, Contempts, and pinching Necessities with a calm composed Mind; and that of Self-denial, and taking up the Cross, and following Christ, through Honour and Dishonour, through good Report and bad Report, through the hottest Services and hardest Sufferings. I'll even labour for the utmost Perfection in Grace. *I am far from having yet attained, as if I were already perfect, but I follow that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus: I count not myself to have apprehended,*
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(a) Matth. vi. 33. (b) Micah vi. 8. (c) Tit. ii. 12. (d) Philip. iv. 8. (e) 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7. (f) John iv. 34.

but this one Thing I do, forgetting those Things that are behind, and reaching forth unto these Things that are before, I press towards the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus (a). I love the Lord, because he hath heard my Voice and my Supplications. Because he hath inclined his Ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The Sorrows of Death compassed me, and the Pains of Hell gat hold upon me, I found Trouble and Sorrow. Then called I upon the Name of the Lord, O Lord, I beseech thee deliver my Soul. Gracious is the Lord and righteous, yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple, I was brought low and he helped me. Return unto thy Rest, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my Soul from Death, mine Eyes from Tears, and my Feet from falling. I will walk before the Lord in the Land of the Living. I believed, therefore have I spoken, I was greatly afflicted. I said, when I was in my Haste, all Men are Liars. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits towards me. I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. I will pay my Vows unto the Lord now in the Presence of all his People. Precious in the Sight of the Lord is the Death of his Saints. Oh Lord, truly I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant, and the Son of thy Handmaid, thou hast loosed my Bonds (a).

LIV. The Believer proceeding in such sure Steps, and ascending by such sure and apt Gradations to Heaven, his Heart heaves up, and is wholly tuned to the triumphant Praises of God and his Grace.

Can the heavenly Soul altogether hold in his secret Sense of these Things? Can he smother such Heart-reviving and Heart-overcoming Meditations? O! No, no. His Thoughts begin to rise within him, and to swell to such a Length and Height, as he cannot contain.

Have I the certain Prospect of beholding the Glory of God, of standing about his Throne, and of being eternally

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(a) Philip. xiii. 14. (b) Psal. cxvi. 1----16.

eternally satisfied with his infinite and overflowing Goodness? O wonderful! And have I the pure and ravishing Joy that springs from the lively and certain Hope of Heaven's Happiness; and all this besides the refined Pleasures, which, being interwoven with every Grace and every Duty, leave such a delightful Relish in my Soul? O I hug my Soul in its happy Condition! *The Lines are fallen to me amidst Pleasantnesses, and I have a goodly Heritage (a)!* And whence is all this to me? Whence but from the Mercy and Kindness of the Lord, which have been of old (b); and his Truth which endureth for ever (c). O but the Lord is gracious, and full of Compassion (d); slow to Anger, and of great Mercy (e)! Who is a strong God like unto thee, and thy Faithfulness round about thee (f)? Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the Heavens, and thy Faithfulness reacheth unto the Clouds (g). Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits: Who forgiveth all thine Iniquities: Who redeemeth thy Life from Destruction, and satisfieth thee with good Things (h). O that all the Sorrows, and all the Griefs which throb my Heart, and all the Mirth and Joy which enlarge the same, were turned into one melodious incessant Song of free Grace, redeeming Grace! Let my Soul magnify the Lord, and my Spirit rejoice in God my Saviour (i). And O that I could mention the loving Kindness of the Lord, and the Praises of the Lord, according to his great Goodness, and according to the Multitude of his tender Mercies (k).

LV. The Heaven-born and Heaven-breathing Soul is now on the next Step to Heaven, but before he can reach it, the dark and gloomy Valley of Death must be passed.

And here many Clouds are like to o'ercast the Soul. Which Way soever I view Death, says the thoughtful Man,

(a) Psal. xvi. 6. (b) Psal. xlv. 6. (c) Ps. cxvii. 2 (d) Ps. cxvi. 3. (e) Ps. ciii. 8. (f) Ps. lxxix. 8. (g) Ps. xxxvii. 5. (h) Ps. ciii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. (i) Luke i. 46, 47. (k) Isa. lxiii. 7.

Man, there is something casts up very uncouth, and very startling. Ever since I had a Being, I have been accustomed to bodily Sensations, but when Death cometh, I shall drop this Body, and become a naked Soul: And whatever Objects I take in, whether grateful or disagreeable, they shall be received without the Ministry of an organized Body, and without the Inlet of the Senses: And farewell then all corporal Enjoyments. But, what makes Death yet more awful, 'tis an Entrance into the invisible World, where the Face of God's Throne is turned upon the Soul, and Hell is no more under a Covering (a). Yea, 'tis the Door to Eternity, where either 'tis all Night or all Day, an eternal Day, or an eternal Night: And so Death is the Gate whereby every Soul enters either into an Eternity in Heaven, or an Eternity in Hell: While the Body for a Time lies covered with Darkness in the Grave, and is shivered into Dust.

Yer if Faith be in a lively and vigorous Exercise, it can soon scatter these Mists, and dispel these Clouds.

I drop this Body, *says the Believer*, but what of this? 'Tis only the Body, which is the Shell and Tabernacle of the Soul, that is dissolved: For the Soul remains untouched and incorrupt, and takes its Flight unto Heaven and Glory. What Loss can I be at in slipping out from a Body of Corruption? In breaking the Fetters wherewith my Soul has been many a Time entangled? Or in laying down a Weight which did clog and depress my Soul, when it should have been mounting towards Heaven?

'Tis true, that by this I remove from all corporal Enjoyments: But what of all this? Were there indeed no other, or no better Comforts than these, Death indeed would look grim, and have a terrible Aspect: But who can believe this, that believes he has a Soul, or a Substance within him, more perfect than his Body? If there be a reasonable Spirit in a Man, why are not its noblest Pleasures fetcht from the Acts of Reason, and not from the Impressions of Sense? Shall the most perfect Substance fetch its best Pleasures from that which

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(a) Job xxvi. 6, 9.

is more imperfect? Or shall the noble and immortal Spirit, so far degenerate and forget itself, as to bow down and serve the Body for the Pleasures it relishes?

Well then, says the heavenly Soul, I know here what I should do, and what I would fainest be at in all the World. I'll be training up my Soul, and inuring it to rational, spiritual, and heavenly Delights, which my Soul can carry alongst with it where ever it goes, whether in the Body, or out of the Body, and which can subsist after Death. And what be these? They are the amiable Views, and delightful Contemplations of the glorious Excellencies of God, and the blessed Jesus: They are the Pleasures of Faith, Love, Hope, Conformity to God, and Acquiescence in him, &c.

So that I have already some experimental Sense of the Way of living happily in the other World. I have been accustoming myself to Divine *Meditation*, which can fetch from far and near all the amiable Perfections of the Deity, all the alluring Perfections of Christ, and all the Glories of Heaven, to ruminate upon, and fill me with sweet Solace. I have been essaying also to live by that *Faith*, that apprehends all the Fulness of God and of the Mediator, and applies them for Use to answer all my infinite Occasions. I think I ken something of living in *Love* to God and the blessed Redeemer, and sweetly acquiescing in him as infinitely amiable and satisfying. And so far as *Self denial* takes Place in me, I find nothing more sweet and pleasing to my Mind, than to go out of myself to give Room to Christ, that he may be all in all to my Soul. I find also that Dependance on the Lord is a pleasant Posture of Spirit, being the Soul's settling on that All-sufficiency that's enough for all the Angels in Heaven. And in a free and voluntary *Subjection* to God, I find all the Delights of Resignation to the Divine Will. And now being to go out of this World with such Divine Principles in-wrought in me, I know how to live and live happily in the next. 'Tis in the other World my Faith, if there be any Place for it, shall make bright Discoveries, without the Darkness and Hesitation there is in Unbelief. My Meditation shall then be

no longer distracted with the innumerable diverting and seducing Objects of this Life, but I shall contemplate the Divine Excellencies endlessly in themselves, and in their Communications; where I am sure I shall see enough to affect me with Wonder and Transport, and Joy for ever. Love shall then be no more in a Contention or Demur about different interfering and challenging Objects; for there it finds its proper Object, even him who is only lovely, and altogether lovely! 'Tis then that Self-denial, that pleasant Grace, will be in its Perfection: The proud Flesh, which was the main Thing that did compete, being laid in the Grave. And Dependance shall there have nothing to do, but to live and subsist immediately on the Divine Fulness: But the Divine Fulness, said I! what can be better? what so good? Yea, what else can serve the Turn? And 'tis then, that I'll count it my Meat and Drink to serve the Lord in a perfect Manner: For there the Competitors with the Will of God are no more; Corruption is extirpate; the Flesh is laid by; the World is not; and Devils can never again reach me. How pleasant is the View that a sanctified Soul may have through Death and beyond it!

Doth Death undress and unclothe me with respect to this Body? Then 'tis certain, says the thinking Soul, I shall be happy or miserable in the other World, according to that State of Soul and Temper of Mind, wherewith I go out of this. If my Delights and Satisfaction were confined to Things sensible and worldly, that are altogether foreign to the Nature of my Soul, and no ways adapted to its Exigencies, that would be sad indeed: For what then would become of me, when a naked Soul, and when removed from all corporal Enjoyments? But, on the other Hand, says the gracious and heavenly Soul, since my Affections are terminate in God, and since I settle my Soul, and place its Happiness only in him, here there is a Suitableness, and here there is a Sufficiency for my Soul; enough to entertain, to please and to ravish it; which Death, the Bereaver of earthly Comforts, cannot deprive me off. Let Desires then stretch themselves to the utmost, there is still more in God, more in Christ,

more in Heaven than I can find Desires for. And let Love, Delight, and Joy swell in Height, in Length, in Breadth through all Eternity, there is enough in God to satiate them, without being glutted, and as little disappointed.

Again 'tis true, saith the Soul, Death enters me into the *invisible* and *unknown World*: But why was I planted in this World, but in order to be transported into the next? And should not the World I go to, have more of my Heart, than the World I leave? I know not distinctly the invisible Regions, but the Lord *Emmanuel* is gone into that Country, and is Governor of that World, and therefore by Faith I can follow him, tho' into unknown Lands.

'Tis true again, saith the Believer, and which is most amazing, Death enters my Soul into *Eternity*: And this is a Breadth I can never fathom; a Length I can never reach, a Depth I can never dive. O Eternity! Eternity! what shall I compare thee unto? Eternity is a Beginning without any Beginning, Middle or End: Or a Beginning always beginning, never nearer the Middle, or nearer the End. But alas! Apprehension is dazled, and Invention is astonish'd, when I would search into Eternity! But O amazing, swallowing-up Eternity, tho' I cannot comprehend, yet may I never forget thee! O *that thou wert written in a Book, and graven with a Pen of Iron in the Rock for ever!* And O that my Heart were the *Book*, and my Meditation were the *Iron Pen*: Especially when Pleasure fanneth, or the Flesh rebelleth, or the Spirit faileth!

But is so long an Eternity before me, and Death so certain, and so near me? Then why, O my Soul, wouldst thou set up Rest on this Side of *Jordan*? What's a Minute to Eternity? What's thy short Punctilio of Time, to an endless Duration? And what are all the short Pleasures of Time to Eternal Joys? Is Death an Entrance into an Eternity? What's thy proper Work, O my Soul, and thy main Business, but by the Exercise of Prayer, Meditation, Repentance, Faith, Love, Hea-
venly,

venly-mindedness, &c. to be trimming, preparing and fitting up thyself for a blessed and happy Eternity?

Why lookest thou but at a Distance to Eternity? Why behavest thou as if it were an *Un-friend* Land, or as if thou wert *Way-ward* from it? Nay rather haste and make ready, and God send thee good Speed to a blessed Eternity!

Have I the delightful Prospect of entering by Death into an Eternity of Joy? Oh! I greatly complain, there is so little longing for Heaven! I do desire a Right to Heaven, and the Possession of its Glory, and all that *Righteousness*, that's necessary to inherit that everlasting Kingdom (a): But alas! how dully, heavily and heartlessly! For if crossed in worldly Affairs, or surprized with Losses, to be told of Heaven's Happiness, how small is the Comfort it affords! I find Nature favouring itself, loving the World, abhorring Death, and, in some Measure, loath to enter even into a happy Eternity. O that it were otherwise with me! O that I were more mindful of Heaven, and more fitted for its Glory! O that I had a greater Relish of its Joys! I put up my Petitions unto thee, O God: I make my Moan and Supplication unto thee, O Lord. O make me know in myself, what Heaven is. Give me such an experimental Sense of it, as may be in me *Begun-glory*: That notwithstanding my Respects to the Body, and Love to a natural Life, I may entertain the Summons of pale Death, not only contentedly and willingly, but also cheerfully and joyfully, as being but a dark Passage to the Land of *Light* (b), and a troublesome Passage to the Land of *Rest* (c): Which Passage and which Foord the blessed Redeemer hath gone, and passed before me, *who by Death hath destroyed Death, and him that had the power of it, that is the Devil* (d): And having by Death given Death its deadly Wounds, hath vanquished Hell, and opened the Gates of Heaven. Therefore, says the Believer, *Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil* (e): Why? Because

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(a) Matth. vi. 33. (b) Rev. xxi. 23. (c) Heb. iv. 9. (d) Heb. ii. 14. (e) Psal. xxiii. 4.

he is with me, who is the first and the last, and that liveth and was dead, and behold he is alive for evermore, Amen; and hath the Keys of Hell and of Death (a).

LVI. *The Believer actually passing the Valley of Death, and getting through his last Conflict.*

Now the Believer enters into the List with his last Enemy, *Death*, and feels a hard Conflict with the same, but yet comes off victorious in the Issue. Many pensive Thoughts may cast up in his Mind; yet, if Faith be lively, it can dispel all the melancholy Clouds that Death would draw over the Soul, which may find him in such Exercise, and sometimes in such a Conflict of Thoughts as these.

Death, I see, is coming hard, and what fatal destroying Work will it make! But, O my Soul, saith the Believer, 'tis not mine immortal Spirit which is breathed in me from the Almighty, nor is it the Work of Grace, implanted by the Spirit of God, that is destroyed by Death; 'tis only the Work of Sin and the Work of Satan in the Soul. As for the Body, it hath no Life of its own, and it is only taken down to rear it up a more refined glorious Body.

Death hath already prevailed upon the Out-works of my Constitution and Frame: The Legs tremble, the Arms shake, the Nerves shrink with paralytick Motions. O my Soul, be content of this, and let it be with thy own Consent to depart from thy Body; for 'tis better to be absent from the Body than to be absent from the Lord, and the Believer while absent from the Body, is present with the Lord (b). Thou knows the Lord shall be thy Strength, and thy Salvation for ever (c).

My Head is already hanging down, and falling aside. Well, O my Soul, bow thy Head willingly, and give up thy Ghost into the Hands of thy Redeemer, and then thou shalt again lift up thy Head with Joy in the Possession of the Glory that is to be revealed, and lift up thy Face to God without Spot and without Fear (d).

(a) Rev. i. 17, 18. (b) 2 Cor. v. 8. (c) Psal. xxvii. 1. (d) Job xi. 15.

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Alas my Sins and Transgressions! there is nothing disquiets me so much as these. But, O my Soul, is it not the Blood of Christ that cleanseth from all Sin (a)? The Lord hath dealt graciously with thee to humble thee, and renew thee, and draw thee to a hearty Acceptation of Christ as a Saviour, and a sincere Resignation to him as thy Prince and Lord; and, by a fiducial Apprehension of Christ's Merit, thou art wrapt in his Righteousness, and art sensible the Power of Sin is broken, and the Pollution thereof is purged away; Why art thou then cast down, O my Soul, or disquieted within me? Hope thou in the Lord, for thou shalt yet praise him, who is the Health of thy Countenance and thy God (b). For who shall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect? since God hath justified, and Christ hath died, and hath risen from the dead, and maketh Intercession for us (c).

My natural Spirits are sunk and gone, and sit heavily on my Soul. Why, O my Soul, the Organ of the Body must lose its Temper and Tone before the immortal Soul can withdraw from it: But there are Promises, sufficient Cordials for Souls, particularly, that he'll give Power unto the Faint, and to him that hath no Might increase Strength (d).

I am departing out of the Land of the Living. Mistake not, O my Soul, 'tis but a dying Life, or a living Death thou goes from, and 'tis an immortal happy Life thou goes unto, where they live to God, and live in his Presence, and where they shall not die any more (e).

I am to stand immediately before the awful enlightened Tribunal of God, who is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity. Well, O my Soul, Christ who hath loved thee, and washed thee in his Blood, will present thee there, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing, but holy and without Blemish (f).

I am now turning pale and ghastly to look on. But, O my Soul, 'tis only thy Body that is so, and it shall be raised to an eternal vigorous Vivacity: As for thyself, thou

(a) 1 John i. 7. (b) Psal. xliii. 5. (c) Rom. viii. 33, 34.
(d) Isa. xl. 29. (e) Luke xx. 38. Rev. xxi. 4. (f) Rev. i. 5.
Eph. v. 27.

thou shalt appear in the perfect Beauties of Holiness from the Womb of the Morning, when thou comes forth from thy Body, and art brought forth as a new Creature in the heavenly Regeneration (a).

Darkness is now covering mine Eyes, and the Shadows of Death sit down upon them. But, O my Soul, complain not if Death close thine Eyes upon the Light of the Sun, Moon and Stars, since it opens thy Soul to behold the Light of God's Countenance and the Glory of his Face, in Comparison of which, the Sun of the Firmament is as Darkness; What Need have they of the Light of the Sun or Moon, when the Glory of God doth lighten all in Heaven, *and the Lamb is the Light thereof* (b).

If the Lord enter into Judgment with me, I cannot be justified. True, O my Soul, thou cannot be justified at the Tribunal of Justice, but is there not a Throne of Grace erected by Christ for the free Justification of a returning Sinner? O my Soul, hast thou not fled to the Throne of Mercy, and believed in Christ for Remission of Sin? Hast thou not (tho' alas thy many Sins and Imperfections) lived habitually in the Love of God, in the Admiration of Grace, and in Conformity to the Divine Will? And this could never have been wrought in thee, O my Soul, without a vital Union with Christ, and a Day of his Power. And are there any in Hell so affected to Christ and related to him? Will that Soul be sent to the Pit, whence there is no Redemption, that hath fled under the Wings of the Mediator, and hath turned unto God with all his Heart, and is breathing after Heart-purity and Life-purity, yea the nearest Conformity to God, his Nature, Image and Will, and would fain lead its Life, and spend its Time and Eternity in the Presence of the Lord? No, the Judge of all the Earth will certainly do right, do according to his own Constitution of Grace in the All-sufficient *Immanuel*.

My Heart akes and groans. Why, O my Soul, when present in the Body and absent from the Lord, thou must groan (c). Come forth, my Soul, come forth out of thy

(a) Psal. cx. 3. Matth. xix. 28. (b) Rev. xxi. 23. (c) 2Cor. v. 2.

thy Body, and then thou art in *Immanuel's Land*, where there is no sinning, and so there can be no sighing or groaning for ever.

Death is a solitary Path, where a Man walks alone in the Dark. Say not so, O my Soul; thou art not left alone, for when thou walkest in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, Christ is with thee (a). Death is none of these dark dry solitary Places, where only the Dismal haunt: 'Tis a Path beaten by all before you: The best that ever lived have entered and passed through that Valley; yea the Son of God hath passed it. So that when dying, thou art but in the Path which the Prince of Life hath trodden, who hath gone through this dead Sea, and prepared a Way through this Depth into the heavenly Canaan.

My Lips quiver, my Tongue falters and begins to lose its Speech. But, O my Soul, when brought up into the higher Temple, every one there speaks of his Glory (b). And blessed are they that dwell in that Upper-house, for there they ever praise the Lord (c).

O what Trouble and Pain do I find in every Step of the Soul's Efforts to depart from its Body. But, O my Soul, endure all the Struggle with Patience, Courage, and a heavenly Magnanimity of Spirit. Why should not an Heir of Heaven be willing to take Possession of his Country, and go stich through all the Labours and Difficulties in the Way?

A cold Sweat is freezing my Blood and Spirits. But, O my Soul, mind thy Saviour, who while in the open Air, and on the cold Ground, and when it was far in the Night, did sweat, bearing our Sins, great Drops of Blood falling to the Ground (d).

Death is stinging my Heart. Say not so, O my Soul; say that Death pains thy Heart; but it was Christ thy Saviour that did bear its Sting. He who is Prince of Life encountered Death, when armed with the flaming Sword of Justice, when sharpened with a deadly Sting, and pointed with the dreadful Curses of the Law. And now

(a) Psal. xxiii. 4. (b) Psal. xxix. 9. (c) Psal. lxxxiv. 4.
(d) Luke xii. 44.

now Death having wreck'd its Spite, and left its Sting in Christ as Surety for his People, what is the real Hurt of it? 'Tis only as a bitter Potion, a medicinal Pain, sharp indeed, but for the eternal Health and Happiness of the Soul: And thou mayst say, *O Death where is thy Sting* (a).

I am going out of the World. What World, O my Soul, art thou leaving? Is it not a World of Vanities and Vexations; a World of serious Sorrows and vain Comforts; a World of Cares, Burdens and Troubles; a World of empty Hopes, and certain Disappointments; a World of much Labour in running, fighting and striving for the Crown; and of yet greater Distress in finding we are not so successful as we would. And what is the great Odds between standing 30 or 500 Years gazing on the Theatre of this World, when all that is gotten by it, is but seeing the same Things so much the oftner; for Providence walks much in the same Circle, and Nature has much the same Face through all Ages. What Loss art thou at then in being translated to a better World, where they are now triumphing, while thou art fighting; now singing, while thou art sighing; and where they have no Need of the Sun, Moon or Stars; the Light of God's Countenance, which is the bright and Sunny-side of Providence, being turned upon them for ever.

I find myself unable to bear up under Death's heavy Hand, or to stand under its Shocks. But, O my Soul, thou canst cry, Lord Jesus, be present with me dying; Lord Jesus, support me agonizing; Lord Jesus, comfort me sighing; Lord Jesus, receive me expiring. Thou canst stay thyself on Christ, thy Light and Salvation, and the Strength of thy Heart and Life (b). Thou hast been going up through this Wilderness (c) leaning on thy Beloved, lean and rest on him still through the rough, dark and dangerous Valley of Death.

Time Enjoyments now cease. Not all the Enjoyments, O my Soul, thou met with in Time will or can cease. 'Tis in Time thou hast enjoyed sweet Communion with

Jehovah

(a) 1 Cor. xv. 55. (b) Psal. xx. ii. 1. (c) Cant. viii. 5.

Jehovah and the Lamb: 'Tis in Time thou hast had many a sweet Hour in drawing near to thy God, and thy blessed Redeemer, wherein there hath been strong and pleasant Outgoings of thy Heart towards him, and a sweet Satisfaction in staying thyself upon him. Nothing of this can Death bereave thee of; for who can separate us from the Love of God, *neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things present, nor Things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (a).* So that, O my Soul, all thy spiritual Enjoyments thou takes with thee to the other World, are there perfected for ever. 'Tis only then, the Enjoyments that were to serve but for a Time that now cease, when Time shall be no longer, and when there is no more Occasion for them.

O hard Wrestlings and violent Pangs! But O my Soul, dost thou suffer any Agonies and Pains like those of Jesus Christ; when he grappled with the Wrath of God, and the Powers of Darkness, and the Sorrows of Hell compassed him about, and who, notwithstanding of his having the Fulness of the Deity to support him, the Ministry of an Angel to strengthen him, and the Assurance of Victory to encourage him, was amazed and sorrowful even unto Death (b), and all this he suffered for thee, it was all to destroy the Power of Death, and to make it tolerable, yea profitable, and that thou mayst say, *That to die is gain (c).*

My Breathing is making great Stops and Pauses, 'tis near ceasing. But O my Soul, 'tis not the Air thy Body draws in, but the vital Breath of the Father of Spirits that is thy Life, and thy Air, and thy Element. If the Spirit of Christ, which is the Spirit of Life, be in thee, thou shalt live and breathe in the Air of Glory: And without this a Soul, were it even in the midst of Heaven, would pant and gasp in the Throws of eternal Death.

I am to make my Appearance among the glorious Angels, Archangels, Cherubims, Seraphims: How unfit am

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(a) Rom. viii. 33, 34. (b) Mat. xiv. 33. (c) Philip. i. 21.

I to be seen among such a fair, glorious, and majestic Company! But, O my Soul, thou art cloathed with the Righteousness of Christ the Son of God, and therefore, thou art clear as the Sun, and fair as the Moon (a), and may lift up thy Face among the glorious Cherubims and shining Seraphims without Fear.

My Heart is now failing me. But, O my Soul, hath not the Lord said, He will never leave thee nor forsake thee (b), and that when Heart and Strength faileth, God is the Strength of thy Heart, and Portion for ever (c).

I am losing my Body, an essential Part of me, yea, as another Self. But, O my Soul, Hast thou much Reason to regrette the parting with that which hath so much incumbered thee, yea defiled thee? Is it not the Body, and its Appetites, that hath so much muted the Wings of the Soul, when it should have been soaring upwards and Heavenwards on the Wings of Faith and Love? Hath it not been the Interest of the Flesh, that hath competed many a Time with the more valuable Interests of the Spirit? Hath it not been as a very imperious Handmaid to the Soul, when it should have been commanded by it? Hath it not caused often a sinful Division of the Heart between God and the World? And besides, thou dost not lose it, but parts with it only for a Season; as a Person lays by an Instrument he hath no Use for at present, or puts off a Shoe that pinches him: And thou shalt meet with it again a glorious Body, and more fitted to be a Companion to an immortal Spirit.

*The Moment of Dissolution is at Hand, when my Soul steps out of Time into Eternity: This is a thoughtful Change. True it is, O my Soul; but mind that the Word of God calls it by the agreeable and sweet Term of *Awakening*. When I awake, saith the Psalmist (d), I shall be satisfied with thy Likeness. The Life here in this World is a Dream, where all is acted by Images in the Fancy, but let the Soul depart, 'tis awakened out of this Dream, and hath no Occasion for the Images of Objects painted in the Imagination, since 'tis now, and never till now,*

(a) Cant. vi. 10. (b) Heb. xiii. 5. (c) Psal. lx. iii. 26. (d) Psal. xvii. 15.

now, thoroughly awake to see every Thing as it is, and God as he is (a).

I am presently a naked Soul. Say not so, O my Soul, if thou hast put on the Lord Jesus (b), if cloathed with Immortality (c), if covered with our House which is from Heaven (d), if beautified with the Graces of the Spirit of God, if made all glorious within, and brought into the Chamber of the King's Presence, in Raiment of Needle-work (e). Say not thou art naked, when so well adorned with all the Embroideries of Heaven.

How shall I find myself, when a pure Spirit. How hast thou before now found thyself, O my Soul, in these golden Hours, when retiring from the World to be inward with God, and being refined from Earth, and elevate in thy Spirit above earthly and carnal Things; thou couldst not express what inward Satisfaction thou hadst in a high Complacency in God, fervent Love to him, and a worshipping Posture at his Throne; and when thou couldst not by Words make another understand, what Pleasure and Delectation thou felt in the profound Veneration of eternal Wildom, eternal Power, eternal Goodness and eternal Holiness; and what Heaven-like Joy thou experienced in deep Humility, Self-denial, Abstraction of Mind from the World, living above corporeal Sensations, and a thankful praiseful Frame towards God. Think on these, and consider them, as perfected in a separate gracious Soul, and thou may ken somewhat how it will find itself.

My Soul is now going out of my Hands. What? my Soul; speak not so; for if thou means it was maintained and upheld by thee, it was never in thine own Hands, nor had thou ever any Support but the immediate Hand of God. One Body may bear up another, but a Spirit can have no Stay but God; nor can any Thing supply it, whether it be without or within a Body, but the Fullness of God the Father of Spirits. And hast thou not before now committed thy Spirit unto God? Did not thou see the Need of this, even while thy Soul lodged in

(a) Ezek. iii. 2. (b) Rom. xiii. 14. (c) 2 Cor. v. 4. (d) 2 Cor. v. 2. (e) Psal. xlv. 13, 14.

in thy Body; and didst thou not say, Blessed Redeemer, I commit all that relates to me, in Time and through Eternity, into thy Hands, and I am persuaded, thou wilt keep the Trust I commit to thee (a).

My Body is left in Death's Hands. Say rather, O my Soul, that thy Body remains in Death's Territories, and only in such Territories thereof as belong to Immanuel's special Empire and Kingdom, who is *the First and the Last, and was dead and is alive, and behold he liveth for evermore*, and hath the Keys of the invisible World, and of Death (b). And so *the Day will come, that all that are in the Grave shall hear his Voice, and these that hear shall live* (c).

My Body will now turn loathsome to look at, and dissolve into the Dust. But, O my Soul, hath not the earthly House of thy Body been but a smoaky one? How often have the Fumes of indwelling Concupiscence made thine Eyes to gush with Tears? And has it not been a very strait and narrow Lodging to the Soul, causing many a Time great Pressures and Oppressions upon thy Spirit? And hath it not been but a dropping Cottage at best; one Defluxion coming down after another from the weak distempered Head? And now thou layest it down, and with it all Principles of Corruption, Mortality and Disorder, and shall take it up again at the Resurrection, spiritual and incorruptible, and receiving an uninterrupted Influence of Life, Health, and vigorous Immortality from Christ the great Head and Lord: For, *tho' sown in Corruption, it shall be raised in Incorruption; tho' sown in Weakness, it shall be raised in Power; tho' sown in Dishonour, it shall be raised in Glory; tho' sown a natural Body, it shall be raised a spiritual Body* (d); and *tho' laid down a vile Body, it shall be raised and made conform to the glorious Body of Christ* (e). And what Loss is there in all this?

O the sharp Conflict in the extreme Moment! But, O my Soul, if this be a great, it is the last Conflict with the

(a) 2 Tim. i. 12. (b) Rev. i. 17, 18. (c) John v. 25. (d) 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44. (e) Philip. iii. 21. 4

the last Enemy, Death, and it is but a Moment, and then thou shalt be beyond all Conflicts for ever; *for there shall be no more death (a)*. Didst not thou, O my Soul, many a Time, when groaning under the Body of Sin and Death, own before the Lord, that if a sharp Rod be necessary for promoting the Work of Mortification, thou wouldst be satisfied that the Lord should lay this on thee, for the killing of Sin, the purifying of thy Spirit, and the fitting thee more to the serving of God here, and the Enjoyment of him hereafter, rather than be so oppressed with the Power and Importunity of thy Corruption? And now art thou not willing to endure this short, tho' sharp Conflict, when so near the Crown, and where there shall be no more Sin, and where *his Servants shall serve him (b)* in the most perfect Manner, and have Communion with him as they would? Doth it not comfort thee that this is the last Combat, and the Crown is at Hand, the last tempestuous Wave, and the delectable Haven is near, the last painful Struggle, and now there is *entring into the Joy of our Lord (c)*.

I am taking Farewel of all Friends. Say not so, O my Soul: Thou art going to the best Company, and to thy best Friends, even to God thy Father, to Christ thy Elder Brother, the best Friend that ever poor Souls had; thou art going where there are Angels and Arch-angels, these benign Beings that have so often ministered to thee here; where are Prophets and Apostles, on whose Doctrine all thy Hopes are built; where are Martyrs, Confessors, and all holy Men that have died; and where there are no separate Interests or unhallowed Disputes to cool their Love; and where are all thy natural Relations that have died in the Lord. Thou dost not then, O my Soul, lose thy Friends, but goes to the Place appointed a little before them, where thou art gathered, not to the Congregation of the Dead, but of the Living.

My Heart breaks, fails, dies. It will be so, O my Soul, when thou retirest from the Body. The Soul can-

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not

(a) Rev. xxi. 4. (b) Rev. xxii. 3. (c) Matth. xxv. 23.

not live any longer in a Body, or in the Heart of a Body when 'tis gone from it. 'Tis the Soul that lives in the Heart, and a Soul can have no Perception or Consciousness or Motion in a Heart when it has retired from the same. It must carry its Thoughts, Perceptions and Self-activity alongst with it unto the Throne of God, when it returns unto him (a).

I am now stepping over the Threshold into the invisible World. Christ Jesus be with thee, O my Soul; the Lord Jesus be with thy Spirit: The Lord Jesus give his Angels charge concerning thee, that thou may be carried into Abraham's Bosom. Into thy Hand I commit my Spirit, thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth (b). Lord Jesus receive my Spirit (c). I know in whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that Day (d). I have not with Paul been caught up into the third Heavens, and seen the ineffable Glory (e). I have not with Daniel seen the Ancient of Days sitting with Thousands Thousands ministring unto him, and Ten thousand Times Ten thousand standing before him (f). I have not seen that fair and glorious Company that stand about the Throne, with the Lamb in the midst of them, and are singing the Song of Moses and the Lamb (g); but I take his Word for it, who is the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, that the Regions of Glory are good and delectable Lands, and I rest in the Accomplishment of his Promises; and here I deposit my Life, my Soul, my All in his Hands; for the Body also I leave as a Pawn, Pledge, and Trust in my Redeemer's Hand, to take it up again another Day with Advantage; for I know the Faithfulness, and I know the All-sufficiency of the great, wonderful, never-changing IMMANUEL.

LVII. The

(a) Eccles. xii. 7. Philip. i. 23. (b) Psal. xxxi. 5. (c) Acts vii. 59. (d) 2 Cor. i. 12. (e) 2 Cor. xii. 4. (f) Dan. vii. 9, 10. (g) Rev. vii. 9. and xv. 3.

LVII. *The Valley of Death being passed, the Soul finds itself in eternal Life.*

The Soul now reaches Heaven; and when there, it is not inclosed in a surrounding Glory, without any active Principle from within to correspond to that happy Place, but it hath vital self-moving Principles in it, that elevate and adapt it to its high Enjoyments. If the separate Soul were a dead and senseless Thing, it could not take in any of the heavenly Joys. There is God in all his Glory: But if the Soul had no living Principle in itself, it could find no more Pleasure in the Glory of God, than a Stone can find in the Brightness of the Sun. In Heaven there is Christ and all his Fulness: But if there is no internal vital Principle, there is no Sense of Wants, and so no taking in of the Mediator's Fulness. In Heaven there are *Rivers of Pleasures*: But if there is no active conscious Power in the Soul, there could be no opening of the Heart to receive them. The proper Notion of Life is Self-activity, and Feeling of the same, with Perception of Objects and Enjoyments suitable. And the Difference between the natural and spiritual Life in a Man, lies in this, that in the one there is no Principle of Activity, but a Man's own Soul, whereas in the other the Spirit of Christ is the animating and actuating Principle (a).

Hence the great active and vital Power in all the glorified Saints, making up their happy eternal Life, is the *external Spirit of Christ* eternally dwelling in them. What Souls are to Bodies, that is Christ to all the blessed Souls, the very Soul and Life of them. 'Tis as true in Heaven as on Earth, that 'tis not so much the Believer that liveth, as *Christ that liveth in him*, and more fully so. 'Tis as true in Heaven as on Earth, that *without Christ we can do nothing, and that our Life is hid with Christ in God*, and that Christ is *All in All*. As *Christ in us the Hope of Glory*, so 'tis Christ in us that will be the Perfection of Glory. It is not for nought that Christ is himself called *Eternal Life* (b),
and

(a) John iii. 36. (b) 1 John v. 20.

and that he is represented as the *Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of God* (a); Men and Angels too, being as so many Branches receiving Life from him; And it cannot have less than this great Meaning, when he prays that Believers *may* at length, when they behold his and his Father's Glory, *be all one in the Father and the Son, as the Father and the Son are One* (b). 'Tis IMMANUEL that fills all in Heaven with immortal Vivacity. He is the Light and Life of that higher House, and his sweet and lively Influences, communicate there to the full, raise all the heavenly Inhabitants to the full Power and Strength of Immortality and eternal Life.

And, O what a Flow of Delights and Joys will come into the Glorified's Mind upon such a Perception and Reflection as this, that 'tis the Spirit of God, the Spirit of *Emmanuel*, that is the active Principle of all their Vitality, yea the self-moving Principle of Life in them!

And here we may suppose the blessed Spirit to have such joyful Reviews of this, as these: Doth the Spirit of Christ, as *the Spirit of Glory*, rest upon me? Doth the eternal Spirit of the Son of God dwell in such a Soul as mine hath once been? O wonderful! This is the Soul where once Satan's Seat was, where once the Prince of Darkness had his Throne. This is the Soul where Lusts, innumerable Lusts, where Idols, a Multitude of Idols, where *Ziim* and *Ochim*, where Devils and Dragons, and Satyrs once had their Dwelling. And now, is such a Spirit cleansed, purged, and made ready to be an eternal Habitation for the Spirit of Christ? O amazing Grace! While Sin and Satan had me in Possession, and did lord over me, my Soul then was covered in Darkness, and lay buried in Death, and gloomy Horrors were its Dwelling. But now hath it not only enter'd into the Seat of Light, Life and Joy, but the very Spirit of Light, Life and Joy, hath enter'd into it, to keep Possession of it, and this for ever. O

Eter-

(a) Rev. xxii. 2. (b) John xvii. 21

Eternity itself is not too long for the Contemplation and Adoration of so much Grace!

Another sweet Thought, we may suppose, the glorified Saint to have upon this. Doth the Spirit of *Emmanuel* not only inhabit me, but animate me as another Soul, or another Self in me, then the Principle of this happy Life must be of vast Comprehension and Activity; then the Fountain of it is perennial; then the Head of the vital Streams of the celestial Life can never run dry: There is no Hazard now from the Mutability of a created Will, or the Defectibility of created Grace; since 'tis not our Spirit but a better Spirit within us, that is the Principle of our blessed Immortality and eternal Life. O Grace, eternally immutable! O Love, eternally inexpressible!

Another sweet and delectable Thought of a glorified Spirit, upon this View of its State, may be this. Doth the living and vivifying Spirit of the Son of God unite himself so closely and intimately to me, as that neither Sin, nor Satan, nor the World, nor Death, nor Self, nor any other Thing, can interveen between me and Christ, the very Soul of my Soul: O but this makes a vigorous Immortality, and a vivacious Eternity! 'Tis not any created Power that's my Stock and Strength, to bear me out through Eternity in a joyful vigorous Sprightriness: For if so, the Subject might waste, the active Principle might decay, and its Activity fail; but if it is the permanent vital Energy of Christ's Spirit that is my Fountain, Spring, and Principle of Life, then I am able now, not only to sustain the *exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*, but also to correspond to the same in an eternal suitable vigorous Activity. O Raptures, Raptures for evermore! Is the Spirit of my Lord and Saviour not only a living, but a Life-giving Principle in me; yea not only a Life-giving Principle, but my very Life itself, the very eternal Life of my eternal Life: What high Emotions of Love, Joy, Praise, Wonder, and Admiration will this raise in the heavenly Inhabitants! Even such, as were there any Thing beyond
Raptures

Raptures and Transports, yet it could not express or represent their great inconceivable and ineffable Joys.

In the *next* Place, Another essential Part of the blessed Immortality and Eternal Life, which the glorified Soul is possessed of, is the *Divine Nature* wrought in them (a), and perfected, and preserved perfect, through a constant Communication with the Spirit of Christ; whereby as Christ lives in that Soul, so also it hath a Life of its own, and native Powers and Principles of its own, to make it eternally active and lively in the Air and Element of Glory. It hath nothing now in all its Frame to make it indolent or drowsy or lazie; nothing in all its Constitution that hath the least Affinity with Death, or any Shape or Image of Death. In that perfect Regeneration 'tis now wholly Spirit, an active Spirit, a sprightly Power, or rather an incessant Activity and Action in all that's great, good and joyful. In Heaven there is a full Sight of the unvail'd Face of God, a full Intuition of the Glory of all his Perfections, a perfect Nearness to all the Mediator's Fulness, and all the Rivers of Pleasures and Delights that flow at his right Hand; and they are active in the Fruition of the same, there is a Spirit, a Divine Principle within them, elevating them to the Perception of such heavenly Divine Objects, and acting in the Enjoyment of them with Vigour, Joy and Transport.

And O what a Source of Joys and Delights will the glorified Soul find upon every Thought of this!

Here is a Soul that was low, creeping and groveling in the Dust, and had more of the passive than active Power in it, that is now wholly Life and Action. O the lively vigorous Joy of this! This is the Soul that was many a Time not only dull through the heavy Organs it was used with, but even once quite dead, thro' Carnality and Worldliness that sunk it in the Flesh and buried it under Clods of Earth; and is that Soul now all Spirit and Life? This is Life indeed, 'tis pure Life without any Death. The Soul that was so weak and feeble, as to be craving every now and then a Cessation,

(a) John iv. 14.

on from Action and Business, is it now come to that, as that vigorous eternal Acting in the most sublime Affairs, is now its very Element, Rest, and Delight? O the Strength of Immortality, and the incorruptible and never fading Joy thereof! The Spirit that was either so num in its Powers, or so clogged with external Incumbrances, as that it could do very little but receive Impressions from Things external; is it now free, not only from all Intaglements from without, but also from all Lassitude, Weariness, or Weakness from within, and from every Cause of them: What's to hinder that blessed Spirit now from having as much Life, and as much Joy in its Life as it would?

Further, 'Tis certain that every one acts and moves in that State and Condition of Life his Understanding opens up and points out to him: And the glorified Spirit having his Understanding perfectly enlightened, thereby there is in his Heaven and Happiness, not only an objective but a subjective Glory; not only a Light shining upon him, even *the Light of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ*; but there is the opening of his Eyes, and receiving this Light, and the bending his Mind to the Contemplation and Admiration of the same. And if a Beam of the Light of God's Countenance, even here away, notwithstanding all the dark Interposition of Sin and Sense, doth diffuse such Life and Joy through all the Faculties of our Souls, what will it be to see the Glory of God directly shining on us? O what joyful Activity will this cause in the blessed Spirit above!

'Tis certain also, that the Saints in Heaven attain such a perfect Disposition of their Wills, as that there is not the least Remains or Degree left in them, of any Repugnancy to the Image and Will of God: But there is in them such a Divine Inclination, as makes them eternally to shut themselves into their chief Good, and causes a strong and uninterrupted Out-going of Spirit to all possible Communion with God. And this must be another Spring of eternal joyful Activity in their Souls. It cannot miss this to keep up their Heart dilated, enlarged, and

and vigorously lively for ever; being now in their Element, when acting in a Way of the nearest Intercourse with Jehovah and the Lamb.

'Tis no less certain, that their Love to God and the blessed Jesus is now perfected. There is no more any Ignorance of God, no Aversion to him, nor Coldness of Love; and this must cause an eternal active Adherence to God, and an eternal vigorous Activity in all Matters that concern his Glory, and in all Enjoyments relating to their own Happiness.

'Tis easy now to see (as perhaps a gracious Soul begins already to taste) what a Spring of Joys will run through all the Faculties and Affections of the glorified Spirit upon every Thought, upon every one of these Particulars.

And here we may suppose the glorified Spirit exulting in his own happy Life and Condition by such sweet Reflections upon it. While, and as long as indwelling Corruption remained in me, I sat in Darkness and in the Shadows of Death many a Time; and while so, my Heart was so dull and spiritless, that I could do little for God, and little becoming an immortal Spirit. But now, that it is given me to understand perfectly the Things freely given me of God; O what Excellency do I see in them, even enough to wrap up my Soul in the Admiration of God, and make me eternally active for his Glory! While the Body of Sin and Death did hang about me, a Cloud of carnal Fumes and earthly Mists did intercept my Sight of IMMANUEL's Country; but now I see it, I see it to be all Life and Joy, to be wholly and purely Life and Joy for evermore. Such was the Infirmary of my Flesh, that I could not bear a full Out-letting of the Glory of God, it so transcends frail Mortality; but now I can look upon it directly, and with such a full Eye and broad Look, as actuates all the Powers of my Soul for ever, in the active and eternal Fruition of God. O this is Life indeed, a happy Life indeed, 'tis eternally so!

Here is a Soul, that while in the Days of my Flesh was sometimes enlarged towards God, and sometimes
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not, sometimes was pressing hard after God, and sometimes not; but now it stands perfectly and indeclinably bent towards God, and the nearest Conformity to him, and Intercourse with him. O this is Joy indeed! My Heart now shall not reproach me, while I live, in any of its Actings or Enjoyments, but it congratulates itself in its own blessed Exercises, and needs not put a Check to its Joy in them. Here is a Soul that was once wandering in the Pursuits of its Heart, from one Vanity to another, because it could find no Rest while at a Distance from God; but lo! now it hath found out its restful Object, found out a Rest in God, and can hug itself in its own happy Choice, and say, *This is my Rest, here will I dwell for ever.* O all Joy! O Joy above all Joy! Here is a Soul that was once distracted and torn hither and thither by innumerable Objects, any of which, or altogether, could neither suit nor fill its Capacity; but lo, now it hath attained the one Thing needful, and the one Thing satisfying, even the Fruition of All-sufficiency itself; and now 'tis made happy as it would, happy according to its Mind, yea happy above all that before now it could conceive or think on.

Again, may the glorified Spirit say, As long as I had to conflict with the contrary Principle of Corruption, my Affection to God was many a Time dull and languishing; but now it makes out to him with immortal Vigour and Strength. It then required great Pains with my Heart to get it wrought up to any Pitch of Divine Love, but now I am as the Seraphim shining with Light and burning with Love to our glorious God and amiable Redeemer. There was then much of the Creature in my Affection; after all the Work upon my Heart to keep it with Christ, it was not so closely unite to him, but that it was often opening itself to temporal Things: But now all the rivalling Objects are gone; I see nothing now in God, or out of God, to seduce my Heart from him; and nothing now can hinder my Love to him, who is only lovely, and altogether lovely. O happy Day, when perfect Affection shall act incessantly on the most perfect Object, and satiate itself with the

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same for ever and ever! O what overflowing Tides of Joy and Admiration for ever will attend every Thought of such a happy Change!

O happy eternal Life! where there is an eternal uninterrupted Action of the Soul upon God, Christ, and all the Fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him; and where there is an eternal vigorous Activity to bear the Soul out in such an eternal Divine Employment and Action: And where there is the eternal Spirit of Christ, sufficient enough to hold it up in an eternal vigorous Activity both in doing and receiving of good. There is no Sin there to separate the Soul from Christ, and his continued vivifying Influences, and therefore nothing to cause fainting or failing of Spirit for ever and ever. No heavy Flesh there to clog the Soul, nor Weakness of animal Spirits to impair its Vigour, being now its absent from the animal Body, and present with the Lord: No worldly Objects there to distract their Minds, but their Affections to Things Divine being united, are strong, and eternally vigorous. Should Grace, because a created Thing, begin to fail, it cannot, because the eternal Spring of its Supply is the all-sufficient, eternal and wonderful IMMANUEL. O what would not the gracious Soul give to attain this here! It may be he is raised to Life, Vigour, and Activity in the Service of God; but then, either the Urgency or Importunity of Sin runs away with his Soul again, or the Affairs of the World slacken his Attention to the Things of God, or the dulness of his Body damps the Vivacity of his Spirit. But there is nothing of all this in Heaven: There is nothing there but true, pure, and perfect Life for ever and ever.

LVIII. The Soul in eternal Life and Glory, sings eternally Hallelujah.

The Soul having now entered within the Vail, where there is the Land of clear Light, pure Love, and perfect Life and Joy: Where there is an innumerable Company of Angels, the Spirits of just Men made perfect, the General Assembly of the First born, and all the great
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Multitude in Heaven, who say and sing, Hallelujah: This Soul, I say, no sooner is on the other Side of Death, and in Possession of eternal Life, but instantly joins in the heavenly Consort, with all the fair Company in Heaven, saying and singing with lofty Notes, and rapturous Strains; Glory to the Lamb, and him that sits on the Throne, Alleluja: Salvation, and Glory, and Honour, and Power unto the Lord our God. Amen. Alleluja (a).

And, O my Soul, dost thou think, that thou already hearest the *Allelujas* of the glorified? He hath, saith the glorified Saint, pardoned all mine Iniquities, the least of which would have been enough to condemn me eternally. *He hath forgiven my Trespases, blotting out the Hand-writing that was against me (b).* He hath pardoned fully, pardoned freely, and pardoned finally. *O who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, Transgression and Sin, and retainest not thine Anger for ever, because thou delightest in Mercy (c).* *Worthy is the Lamb to receive Power, and Honour, and Wisdom, and Dominion and Glory: Amen, Hallelujah (d).*

And he hath called me, saith the triumphant Spirit, with a holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his purpose, which was given us in Christ, before the World began (e). His Spirit has secretly wind-ed himself into my Spirit, and by hidden Passages communicated a vital Savour to my Soul. His heavenly Light hath beam'd into my Soul, letting me see that of the Evil of Sin, and that of the Beauty of Holiness, and that of the Preciousness of Christ, which I never saw before: A Light which did not lightly glance the Brain, but pierced into the very Heart of my Soul. And whence is this, that thou hast manifested thyself to me, and not to the World (f)?

And his vivifying Influence hath made a dead Soul live, and live eternally. *O I have been fearfully and wonderfully made, and yet more fearfully and wonderfully renewed (g)! Blessed be the Father of our Lord Jesus*

(a) Rev. xix. 1. (b) Col. ii. 14. (c) Mic. vii. 18. (d) Rev. v. 12. (e) 2 Tim. i. 9. (f) John xiv. 22. (g) Psal. cxxxix. 14.

Jesus Christ, who hath given unto us the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, and made us know what is the Hope of his Calling, and what's the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance, and what is the exceeding Greatness of his Power to us that believe (a). Amen, Halleluja.

And he hath changed my vile Nature, saith the glorified Saint, and made it a Partaker of the Divine Nature (b). He hath cleansed my Soul from the Filthiness and Pollution of Sin, and made me holy, and meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light (c). He hath drawn the Lineaments of Christ upon my Soul, and transformed me into his Likeness: So that I have been changed from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (d). Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and made us Kings and Priests unto God, to him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen (e), Halleluja.

And to whom hath the Lord vouchsafed so great Kindness and Favour? To me, saith one Saint, that before was so grossly ignorant and senseless; that tho' I was in Hell's Road, yea in the Confiners of Death and Destruction, yet I knew it not, but was secure and jolly, dancing about the Sides of the Pit, until a new Light did spring into my Mind: A Light which hath shewed me the Paths of Life, and that in God's Presence and Favour there is Fulness of Joy (f): And at his right Hand are Rivers of Pleasures for evermore. God who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined in our Hearts, to give the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ (g). O glorious Christ! O glorious Things are spoken of thee, thou Son of the living God, thou Light of the World, thou Lover of Souls! Halleluja.

And to me, saith another Saint, who, before his Grace reached my Soul, went on in a full Career of Sin, and lived as if I could out-face Heaven, out-vie Hell, and out-dare Vengeance; Yet a Day of his Power hath

(a) Eph. i. 17, 18, 19. (b) 2 Pet. i. 4. (c) Col. i. 12.
(d) 2 Cor. iii. 18. (e) Rev. i. 5, 6. (f) Psal. xli. 11. (g) 2 Cor.
iv. 6.

hath passed upon my Heart, and turned such a Sot, or such an incarnate Devil, unto a Saint. O free Grace! O rich Grace! O there is nothing too hard for the Almighty! *Has Grace abounded to the chief of Sinners (a)? Has he pardoned mine Iniquities, because they were great (b)?* O because he hath forgiven much, I have the more Cause to love much (c), and praise much! And O! I'll greatly praise the Lord (d), and my Soul shall incessantly be joyful in God! Sing ye Heavens, shout ye Saints. *Halleluja.*

And his Grace has reached me, says a third Saint, who because I was kept from gross Sins, therefore I was jolly and merry, and did bear up my Soul with the good Hopes of Heavens Happiness: Tho' at the same Time gross Ignorance of the Purity and Spirituality of God's Law, rooted Infidelity as to Gospel-Truths, a secret Disaffection and Malignity of Heart to serious Holiness, predominant Pride, reigning Earthliness and habitual Sensuality did prevail in my Soul. Yet by his powerful and efficacious Grace, he hath made me believe the Things I had not seen, and hope for Things I did not fully know (e). He hath made me sensible of the Purity and Spirituality of God's Law, removed the Estrangement and Enmity of my Heart to God, and caused me part with these Sins, which I counted not only my Pleasure and Ornament, but even my very Life and Subsistence before. He hath caused me to bewail my misplaced Confidence, and enabled me to take Christ for my Prince and Saviour, and God for my Portion, and Heaven for my Home. And hath he done all this for me? O *Arm of the Lord, thou art our Strength (f), and our Song, and art become our Salvation (g).* O how excellent is thy Loving-kindness! Men and Angels celebrate and praise the wonderful Works of our God. *Halleluja.*

And what am I brought unto, says the triumphant Soul, by all these Operations of Grace in Time? And where

(a) Rom. v. 20. (b) Psal. xxv. 11. (c) Luke vii. 47.
(d) Psal. cix. 30. (e) Heb. xi. 1. (f) Isa. li. 9. (g) Isa.
xii. 2.

where do I now find myself? Why, I find myself in Glory, in the Chamber of God's Presence, and in the very Place where his Honour and Holiness dwells; in the proper Place and Regions of all true Joy? Where am I now come? I am come to Mount Zion the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and unto an innumerable Company of Angels, to the General Assembly of the First-born, and to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament (a). And O 'tis good to be here! I prayed to be here; I did run to be here, and fought to be here; I longed, groaned, sighed, breathed, panted and laboured to be here, and lo! I am here at length, says the glorified Spirit! where no Guilt shall ever again overcast my Soul, and no Pollution shall henceforth estrange me from God, or unfit me for his Service: And where no Hatred of Men or Devils shall any more reach me: And where Death hath lost its Sting, and Hell is cast into the Lake that burneth for ever and ever: And where everlasting Joy shall be upon my Head, and Sorrow and Sighing shall flee away (b). O all Joy and Shouting! O Praise, Praise be to the Lord. *Hallelujah.*

O my Soul, saith the glorified Saint, thou art now as happy as thou canst wish, as happy as Happiness itself can make thee. If the All-sufficiency of God and Fulness of Christ immediately communicated, can make thee happy, thou art now happy. If an University of all Perfections, and immediate Emanations from infinite Goodness can make thee happy, thou art now happy, and shall be for ever happy. If Goodness itself, Grace in an abundant, transcendent, supereminent Manner; if all that is in God, and all that is in Christ, and all that is in Heaven can make thee happy, thou art now happy, and shall be eternally happy. O inutterable Joy! O sweet and loud-sounding Praise! O Heaven of Heavens ring with the Acclamations of Grace, Grace, Grace! And let my Soul say, and say again eternally; *Alleluja.*
And

(a) Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24. (b) Isa. xxxv. 10.

And how, saith the glorified Saint, and by what Methods of his deep and wise Providence, did the Lord sit and train me up for this Glory?

Sometimes he brake in upon my House and Family, and bereaved me of some dear Relation: And thus I was laid at his own Door for Comfort; and lo! I have found him alone sufficient, and Ten thousand Times *better than ten Husbands*, ten Children, or Ten thousand Times ten of all Relations. *Hallelujah.*

And sometimes he cut me short in earthly Enjoyments, that I might live on his Promises, and receive my Comforts immediately from himself. And Oh there is no Comfort so pure, so refined, so intimately satisfying, as these that are fetcht immediately from God, and from Christ! And Thanks be to God for any Method he ever took, how severe soever it may appear to the Flesh, to cause me rest only on himself, as my All, and my exceeding great Joy. *Amen, Hallelujah.*

And sometimes he brake in upon my Health. He laid his Hands upon me, and *chastened me with sore Pain upon my Bed*, that I might be crucified unto the World, and mortify the Flesh, and might taste and be ravished with the Delights of Divine Love, and be revived and refreshed with heavenly Pleasures. O but this was well done, and kindly done to a poor Soul, *says the triumphant Saint*, that when I was lying among the Pots, I might become as a Dove with Wings of Silver, and Feathers of Gold: And in Salmon become white as Snow (a)! I not only admire thy Wisdom, but also adore thy Goodness, in all the Methods thou hast taken to save us! O this is the Lord, and we have waited on him; this is our God and he hath saved us. We will eternally be glad and rejoice in him. *Hallelujah.*

But who can utter the mighty Acts of the Lord? Boundless Eternity, be thou filled with the Praises of the Lamb, and him that sits on the Throne. O sing on, ye Inhabitants of Glory; sing on, ye Spirits of just Men made perfect, chant forth the Praises of our God

(a) Psal. lxxviii. 12, 13.

God and the glorious Redeemer. Let there be high-sounding *Allelujas*. We are but Bunglers in this heavenly Exercise: We make but a Jar in the heavenly Musick. When we would praise and celebrate, we do but lessen and disparage the glorious Excellencies of God. What do we but *darken Counsel by Words without Understanding*? Ah! how poorly do we talk of the great Things of God, and the bright Things of Glory! O may we obtain the same Grace with you, and join with you, and make one Consort with you, in the triumphant Expressions of Love, Joy, Adoration and Praise through endless Eternity! *Bless the Lord, ye his Angels, that excell in Strength: Bless the Lord, all ye glorious Hosts of his: Bless the Lord, ye Ministers that do his Pleasure: Bless the Lord, all his Works in all Places of his Dominion: Bless the Lord, O my Soul (a)!*

ALLELUJA, ALLELUJA.

(a) Psal. ciii. 20, 21, 22.



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